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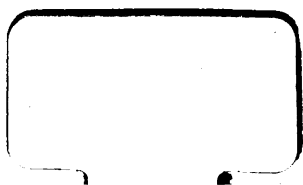
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*The
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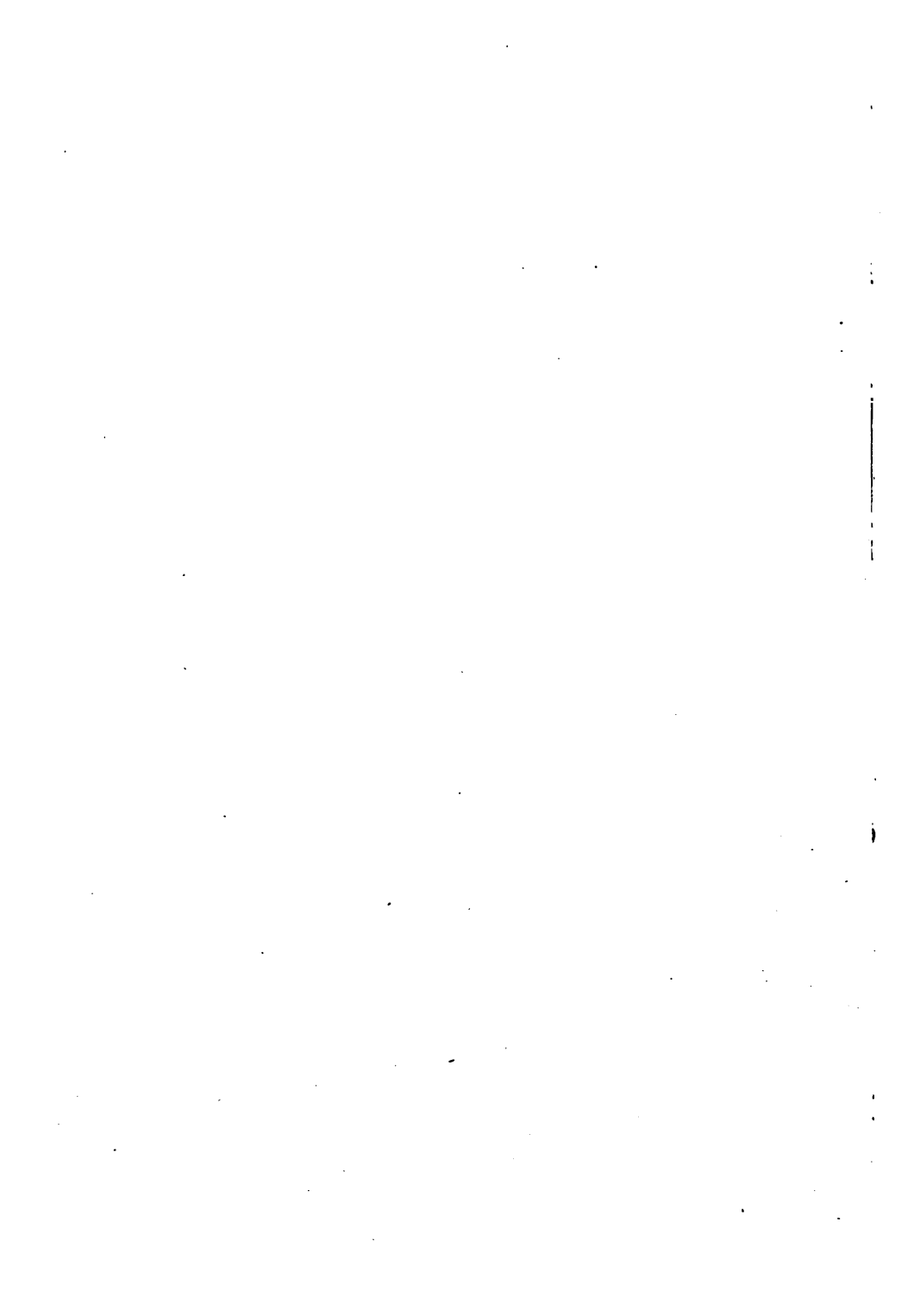
*By
A D Kneppe*



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The DeWiltons of Virginia

By A. B. Knapp

presented

to Lacey

by J. D. Perry



New York, 1904

Broadway Publishing Company

A.F.

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The DeWiltons of Virginia

By A. B. Knoppe

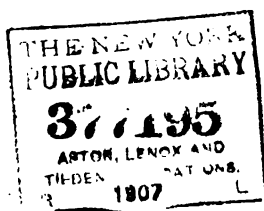
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[INTRODUCTION.

IN the hurry and bustle of crowded city streets, it is difficult to imagine them once the scene of broad acres, and quiet pasture lands, wherein dwelt men of simple tastes and habits. Men who feared their Maker; men whose firm principles and force of character were the inspiration of this country; men whose intelligence and patriotism formed a government which all the world seeks to emulate, and which no earthly power can destroy.

Two hundred years ago there were but few Americans, and the term "foreigner" was unknown. These men and their families, for various reasons, left their native lands, and sought in a new, unmade country, the right to live and die as best suited their theories.

They were brave, courageous and determined. They had had the advantage of civilization, and knew its power and its vices.

In this new land they cultivated the characteristics which they knew were ennobling, and shut out all that were harmful.

In consequence, a hardy, valiant God-fearing nation grew up, the embodiment of all that is good, true and noble, and which will be proud and famous as long as the world shall last.

Mc Donnell Wilson - 18 Mar 1907 - 454

These original settlers are fast becoming forgotten, in the turmoil of modern civilization, and it is only when some gifted author tells of their deeds of daring, are we reminded of their interesting and important lives.

In the following pages will be found the history of an old Southern family, whose influence was widespread and wholesome. Its various members are given a striking individuality, and are depicted with remarkable force and realism.

To those who know the South and love it, this story will be a delight, but to those who know it not, the tale will be a revelation. It graphically pictures Southern life, as it existed before war wrecked its peaceful homes. The simple religion, interesting pastimes and chivalric deeds of these gentle people, have seldom been more skillfully described. The character of Dr. De Wilton is a veritable classic. A more lovable wife and mother could not be known than this beautiful woman to whom Fortune is so fickle.

Her noble, stalwart son, the hero of this interesting work, is one of the most unique and admirable personages in fiction. His strength of character, and dignified, though inconceivable suffering, make him the worthy scion of a noble race, and the highest type of manhood.

The romantic life of the young Louise is one of uncommon interest. Her charming personality, her curious disposition, so cleverly and intelligently analyzed, must elicit as much sympathy as admiration.

The writer of this book possesses the keenest insight into human nature, as well as the rare

talent of imparting it to his readers. He surrounds his people with bits of local coloring, and forms pictures of wonderful charm and brilliancy.

To lovers of folk-lore and romantic fiction this book will afford the keenest delight. It is wholesome, original and exciting, and will spread the purity of its purpose and the power of its teachings upon all who are privileged to read its pages.

JOSEPH TYLER BUTTS.

PREFACE.

To the author of this story life has never been gold tinted; his experiences have been sad and sombre rather than gay or bright. He has been accustomed to see the battle won by the strong, and the race by the swift, to see oppression and chicanery prosper, and such old-fashioned virtues as honesty, integrity, and humility, trampled into the dust. He has seen beggars, or rather rogues, mounted on horse back, while better, purer and worthier and better people toiled along the rough hard highways and byways of life afoot. It is but a natural consequence that this story should in some degree reflect the sadness of the author's experiences and observations, which will touch a responsive chord in many a human breast.

He has tried to present real life as he found it, and not as it is generally depicted by the novelist. This story was not written for the public, but to while away the hours which hung heavily upon the author's hands during a period of enforced idleness, and to revive some old memories which he is loath to consign to the shades of oblivion. Friends, who are responsible for so much that is good and evil in one's life, have persuaded him to publish this work, and he has followed their advice, bearing in mind the old saw, "Blessed is the man," etc.

Very respectfully,

A. B. KNOPPE.

THE DE WILTONS OF VIRGINIA.

CHAPTER I.

At the breaking out of the civil war a family named De Wilton, probably the oldest in all that region, lived in the mountains of Virginia. Early in the seventeenth century Sir Ralph De Wilton, having his title attained, and his estates confiscated, was glad to escape from the mother country with his wife, and bury himself, his family, and a few followers, in this vast and then unexplored mountain region.

After building a log cabin, and clearing a little ground for tillage, his first care was to construct himself at great cost and trouble a substantial stone house, with a slate roof. A near-by quarry, which he had discovered in his hunting and scouting expeditions, had furnished the material for his home, and it was probably owing to this precaution that I am enabled to write of this people to-day, for tradition says that the war whoop of the Indian frequently resounded around this old house in early times, and twice everything outside of it

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was destroyed by fire, the stock were all driven off, while the family and settlers only saved their scalps by the kindly protection afforded by this durable old structure.

The front door, window panes and friable sandstone, of which this old house was composed, contain many leaden souvenirs of the French and Indians, when the garrison was threatened with artillery and massacre, did they not surrender at once. But stout old Sir Ralph, though sorely alarmed, defied them to do their worst. The enemy, however, were without artillery, and after destroying stock, grain and out-buildings, and leaving the little settlement upon the verge of starvation, they retired, never to return. "Windemere" (for this was the name of the settlement, after the old English home) enjoyed a long season of peace and prosperity, which was only interrupted by the revolution, when it had become a place of great importance locally.

Followers of the De Wiltons, and of his wife's family who were Scotch, had come over and joined him. He had taken up a large tract of mountain land around him, had built, or rather started the village of "Windemere" in a very picturesque situation, within a mile of the old house, known as "The Hall." He established the same relations with his people that he had so long maintained with them in the mother country, and no man ever had the good and welfare of his people more at heart. Under these conditions the improvement in the old homestead, village and estate, was almost phenomenal.

The old homestead so modestly begun, had al-

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most attained its present size, and was justly regarded as one of the handsomest country seats in Virginia. The village, beautifully situated, was one of the thriftiest and liveliest in the old commonwealth. The rough mountain side was dotted with small tenant farms, models of comfort and management, and the immense home tract, lying around "The Hall" was the most productive farm in the country.

A happier, better satisfied, or more intelligent people would be hard to find; for it pleased God to build up Sir Ralph, his family and settlement, and to "hedge him about" so that all he did prospered; and being an humble Bible-reading Christian, he gave God the glory by being kind and just and liberal to his tenantry, servants, and the poor of the estate. This good man was so permeated by the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus, and so broad had his sympathies become through the softening influences of tribulation and suffering that he could pity and extend the helping hand, even to the poor and despised Indian, which at that remote period was indeed a most Godlike stretch of virtue.

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CHAPTER II.

A SHORT time before the death of old Sir Ralph a miserable remnant of an Indian tribe, driven from their native fastnesses by the conjoined persecutions of white and red men, wandered to the village of "Windemere," and were seized by the authorities as vagrants. Sir Ralph went to see them in his capacity as magistrate. When the old man arrived at the town hall, he found a most miserable set of women, pappooses, men and dogs, with every idler and loafer in the village collected around them. The city fathers and the mayor were awaiting his arrival.

"Whom have we here, McBride?" asked Sir Ralph, of the mayor.

"A lot of good-for-nothing, thievish, vagabond Indians, squire, only waiting an opportunity to fire buildings, murder or do any other secret mischief that lies in their way."

"Have they been guilty of any of these acts?" asked Sir Ralph.

"Not that I have heard," replied the mayor, "but you and I both know enough of Indians to know what they will do when they have the opportunity."

"Yes," replied the squire gravely, "and we know

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or ought to know, what we would do when goaded on by wild passions unchecked by conscience. Human nature is much the same, savage or civilized, and we, who are supposed to know better, and have the light, should set them a better example. My old friend," said he, addressing a tall, powerful looking old Indian, with a tattered grey blanket about his shoulders, and a battered broken eagle's feather depending from his head, "tell us why it is you have been so unfortunate as to be travelling this bitter weather without moccasins or clothing?"

The old Indian for several moments made no reply, and then advancing toward the magistrate, said with a dignity which all his wretchedness and squalor could not conceal:

"Great pale face chief, the Manitou has given you eyes like the eagles, and eyes like the doves, eyes to look into men's hearts, eyes to look into men's eyes, and appall them when angry, and ready to strike a warrior's blow; and eyes gentle as the dove's, tender as a woman's, when looking upon her first born; when you behold misery and misfortune.

"Your heart can even feel for the poor vagabond red man, and you never speak to him in the voice of the singing bird. But it has not always been with us as it is now,—when the pale faces came to this country, we were a powerful and happy tribe. We received them joyfully, thought the Manitou had sent them to us as a reward for our kindness. They seized the best of our lands, debauched our women, and sold our men fire water, then when a dreadful disease broke out

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among them, and we contracted it and almost all our people died, they drove us from the small portion of our father's heritage which remained to us, and we became the wretched outcasts you see us to-day. Our red brethren have been no more compassionate than the pale faces. They taunt us with being women instead of braves, and will not allow us a refuge, even on their hunting grounds. We are naked and destitute because we have nothing to buy food or clothing with, and we are in your village because we have not a spot in this broad land of our fathers that we can call our own. We are not permitted to stop long anywhere, our little band is lessening, cold and hunger is doing its work. We are hoping that the Great Manitou will not permit our suffering to continue much longer, but will take us from our wretchedness and misery here to our happy hunting grounds in the better land."

The old savage then gravely took his seat. His simple, pathetic speech had its effect upon most of those present, and old Sir Ralph was deeply moved. He ordered these poor creatures to be clothed and fed through the winter, and when spring came he settled them on a wild, rough portion of his large estate, where their descendants remained for many a long year in comparative contentment and happiness.

I merely mention this little incident to give the reader an idea of the people I am trying to describe. They were a race of plain, simple gentlemen, honest in their own convictions; earnest in trying to carry them out, deeply attached to their church and their creed, which was as sim-

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ple as their lives, consisted in deep reverence for, and faith in their Bible.

They believed in it in its entirety; they had a childlike love and trust in it; a deep and abiding reverence for the sacred truths contained within its inspired pages.

To them the book of Jonah was not merely a large fish story, but a living, burning reality, typical of the death and burial of the meek and lowly Jesus.

They did not admire the wit of the funny man when launched at the Bible, or those who profess to believe in it, and when later on a distinguished political speaker sought to amuse the crowd at "Windemere" by witty flings at it and its followers, Mr. De Wilton was observed to quit the stand, mount his horse and ride home.

"The very heathen," he observed a few days afterward, in conversation with Dr. Hargrave, "shame us. They reverence and honor their gods, though made with their own hands; while with us, professing Christians can sit by and hear God's holy book, our only source of light on this earth, ridiculed and made small of by a gentleman, himself a Christian; anxious to represent us in our legislative halls."

They were by nature generous and philanthropic; but their charities were strongly colored by their religious belief. As they believed in simple scriptural charity, they did not endow colleges, build hospitals, or memorial windows in churches, but helped the poor and unfortunate around them in every way that they could.

The De Wiltons, father and son, for many gen-

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erations, were known as the friends of the poor, the unfortunate and the miserable, especially among their tenantry, and they regarded the unfortunate poor of their own estates as a sacred trust committed to them by God himself. They did not stop to inquire whether the recipient was worthy, whether he had brought his poverty and misfortune upon himself by evil courses; it was enough for them to know that they were in need, in poverty and in misfortune. They clothed the naked, fed the hungry, and helped the helpless, and in doing this they thought they obeyed the simple mandates and precepts of the Bible.

CHAPTER III.

THE second building erected on the Windemere estate was the chapel, and though built ages ago, is to-day with its burial ground and park one of the most interesting and beautiful church buildings in the country.

Picturesquely situated between "The Hall" and village a half mile from each, it stands a monument to the good taste and earnest piety of the De Wiltons.

Each generation seems to have taken special delight in embellishing and ornamenting this ancient house of God; and in its architecture you can see evidences of the different periods through which it has passed.

Back of the old church lies the grave yard, one of the oldest in Virginia. It is beautifully situated, and the turf grows green above the grave of rich and poor, great and ignoble, master and slave alike; the poor despised Indian even is not excluded, but has his corner with the rest. The little white grave stones, none of them more than a few inches high, peeping up from the bright, green grass, make the place with its shade trees, shrubbery and flowers more attractive of its kind than any I have ever seen.

Near the church, on the road leading from

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"The Hall" to the village, was the beautiful vine embowered parsonage, built originally for a Mr. Hargrave, and at the time of the beginning of this story occupied by Dr. Hargrave, a descendant of the first occupant. But we will describe him and his cottage later.

The De Wiltons were a progressive people; short horned, and other improved varieties of cattle roamed the hills and valleys of this old estate, and they also imported fine sheep, horses and hogs. They paid great attention to the fertilizing of their lands, using the sweepings and débris of their lime kilns, and all known articles of the kind in their day. They cultivated little or no tobacco, even though it was the staple crop of Virginia, and in this way avoided the subsequent impoverishment of their lands and the wholesale ruin that followed.

They were honest in their opinions, and were high types of manhood. They increased their property in value and extent upon the rough, inhospitable mountain side, while many with far better prospects and possessed of more productive and fertile lands in the valleys and lowlands around them, had come to grief, and were scattered to the four winds.

Why is this that one succeeds under very unfavorable circumstances, while another fails, with every condition apparently to induce success? We attribute all these things in these latter days to the shrewdness and business qualities of men. We tell how poorly one manages, and how well another conducts his affairs, and in this as in all things else, we give man the glory. But I think

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if you read your Bible closely, you will learn from it, that "God setteth up one man and pulleth down another," and that prosperity and adversity, life and death, poverty and riches, come of the Lord.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE eldest son of the De Wilton family had inherited and managed the old estate in unbroken succession from the time of old Sir Ralph to the time of which I am writing. And though you could read in the old church yard, inscriptions to Col. Ralph De Wilton, aged thirty years, who fell while leading his men in one of the battles of the revolution and of Dr. Richard De Wilton who perished in the cholera plague in a southern city, aged 26, and though there were shorter graves of boys and of girls, and even of infants in the De Wilton family, still for a long succession of years the first born son was passed over by the angel of death, and ruled over the estate; being gathered to his fathers after a well-spent life, like a ripe sheaf of wheat.

But nothing in this changeful world endures, and great and deep was the grief of McKenzie De Wilton's family, when upon a beautiful Saturday in early spring, news reached them of the untimely death of their second son under peculiarly distressing circumstances.

Frank De Wilton was a promising, bright boy. He embraced the army for a profession, graduated with great credit at West Point, and was an honest, impulsive, generous young fellow, and for want

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of a better word we will call him a patriot. He believed he had a high and holy duty to perform to his country, and entered on his avocation with the earnestness characteristic of the De Wiltons. But probably the most powerful motive that impelled Frank to seek "distinction at the cannon's mouth," was known only to himself and to another.

While a school boy he had looked into the pretty dark blue eyes of little Anna McLeod, and had felt a decided preference for her. The shy, sweet glances of this little maiden did not discourage him, and she was to this boy a powerful incentive to good. When in the school room he would turn down a boy or several boys and girls, his quick eye would glance at Anna for her approval, and when in the numerous childish games that took place during recess, by some means known only to those who have had experience themselves, he and Anna would invariably be partners. He was her companion to and from school, and in Sunday school they were in the same class, and read from the same book.

Later when he returned for his holiday from West Point, and Anna from her school, he would call at Dr. McLeod's, first a little timidly, then they would have long rambles in the old park, and cemetery. Then he would lead down his favorite white pony, which she mounted, and he on his hunter, they would visit the Indian village, the deer and buffalo park. I can see them now, he with his dark, young, earnest face, wearing a jaunty military cap and handsome uniform; she with her fair complexion, beautiful auburn hair,

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bright, happy face, and slight, girlish figure, engaged in their own happiness, oblivious to everything, travelling through this hard, cold, cruel world, but not of it, living in a world of their own creation, an ideal, happy existence, alas! too soon to be broken in upon and ended forever.

Whenever Frank came home for his holiday it was observed that Anna's little stock of jewelry or bric-a-brac was increased. It began, so the gossips say, with his first holiday, when a very handsome diamond ring replaced the one given by her father. When Frank left home for the last time, after spending three blissful months on leave of absence in Windemere, a second ring adorned Anna's finger, a broad, plain gold band, and then the good people of Windemere knew that the matter was settled. The post master, who by virtue of his office, and by the exercise of a vivid fancy becomes the custodian of so many of our real or imaginary secrets, would smile knowingly when she called for her mail, and these letters so prized came as regularly from the far west as they formerly did from West Point. Anna had just received one of these letters. The ink on her own in reply had scarcely dried when the sad news came. Frank had been in his new sphere of action only three months when his fate overtook him. He had at once become a favorite with officers and men. He was cheerful and faithful in the discharge of his duties. He courted rather than avoided the dangers which always attend scouting in an enemy's country, especially when those enemies are cunning, bloodthirsty savages. In one of these scouting expeditions he and his little party

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fell into an ambuscade, when they were outnumbered two to one. Of that little band one was taken, the others escaped. Frank was the unfortunate one; his horse fell pierced by an Indian arrow. He was knocked senseless by the concussion, and when he awoke to consciousness he was in the hands of foes who knew neither pity nor remorse. They subjected him to tortures too horrible to relate, which he bore with sublime fortitude, and when a few hours later his friends returned with reinforcements to rescue him, they found only his body, so disfigured and mutilated as to be almost unrecognizable. They buried him in a hastily-made and hastily-marked grave, and pushed on to chastise his brutal torturers. The savages had delayed their departure, in the enjoyment of the sufferings of their victim, and they were easily overtaken, and almost exterminated.

But this did not bring back the dead, nor did it give his stricken father and mother any comfort, for they were an essentially religious people, and remembered that it was written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," saith the Lord.

Deeply were the father and mother and brother grieved by the untimely fate of their loved one. The mother was almost frantic. She besought her husband not to leave her son's body in the boundless prairie, but to bring him home and let his last resting place be among his friends and kindred in the old church yard of "Windemere." "I have not long to live," said she, "and I want to be able to go to his grave with Anna McLeod, where we can join our tears and petitions over the one we both loved. I want it more on this dear child's ac-

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count than my own. I know how comforting it will be to her."

The father and brother were not hard to persuade to go upon this pious errand, for though it involved a long, arduous journey, and some personal risk, they at once prepared to depart, and the Monday after the news reached Windemere they drove to the nearest railroad station, thence took the train for Washington, and then to the far west, travelling day and night. After they left the railroad there still remained a rough, perilous ride through the wildest portion of the red man's country. Being furnished an ample guard by the post commander, who was Frank's warm friend, the journey was accomplished without incident. The remains were exhumed, and placed in a coffin. The party returned to the settlement, chartered a car for the body, and took their sorrowful way home.

If the dear boy had been living he could not have received gentler or more delicate attention from them. He was never left alone, even at night, the father taking the early watch, the son the later. When within two hundred miles of Windemere, it was the latter's watch—the father had retired to the sleeper. Eustace De Wilton had taken his place by the dead; the cars sped on; the father in the sleeper was sound asleep, when suddenly there was a severe crash. The sleeping car gave a violent lurch and stood still. Shrieks of agony, screams and groans sounded far beneath the sleepers. Mr. De Wilton came hastily from his berth, and saw a porter passing through, ashen with terror. Mr. De Wilton asked him what had oc-

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curred. The man made no reply, but was hurrying on, when Mr. De Wilton seized him and sternly repeated his question. Then the porter told him that a bridge over a deep cut or chasm had suddenly given away and precipitated engine and passenger cars to the bottom. The sleepers, from their great weight or the providence of God, had kept the track, and the occupants, though unnerved by so frightful a danger, were in perfect safety.

When Mr. De Wilton reached the scene of the dreadful disaster he saw some men taking a man from the wreck, and to his horror he saw it was his eldest son Eustace, crushed, mangled and dying. When his father reached him the power of speech had left him, but a smile played over his pale face, as he took his father's hand and pressed it.

Two days elapsed before Mr. De Wilton could start homeward with the bodies of his two beloved sons. In the meantime news of this double misfortune having reached Windemere, Dr. Hargrave, Jr., with some other friends came on to render what help and consolation they could, but, though not of the character of Job's friends, yet their efforts were equally futile. Mr. De Wilton was as one dazed by the weight of these sudden and severe misfortunes. In the short time his hair had become thickly sprinkled with grey, and an expression of deep grief pervaded the whole man, and it was a sad little party that a few days later landed at the railroad station. More friends met them there, and at two o'clock in the afternoon the little procession started for Windemere, which they reached after dark. The two coffins

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were brought in and placed side by side in the old home.

The De Wiltons had always been accustomed to burying their dead as quietly and unostentatiously as possible, the family and a few very dear friends were all who participated in the ceremonies, but on this occasion the excitement and curiosity of the people had become so intense over these sudden tragedies, that it was impossible for the family to adhere to this rule. The crowd assembled both at the church and house long before the hour for the funeral services. The whole village and people of the estate were there, and many who did not belong to either, and so dense was the assemblage that it was with difficulty that the procession started from the house or reached the old chapel, and upon the edges of this crowd the colored people, red and black, hung like a dark, sombre cloud.

At this time there were in Windemere two Drs. Hargrave, father and son. The father almost a centenarian, the son approaching middle age. The elder Dr. Hargrave had been a very noted and very pious man. One of our learned institutions had at that early period conferred upon him the title of D.D., and it was then quite an honor. This great man had filled the pulpit of his fathers at Windemere for nearly sixty years, until nearly incapacitated by age and physical disability. He had refused lucrative city calls and fashionable churches, and spent himself in the service of his Master, in this comparatively obscure place. Great was the curiosity of the crowd when it was announced that old Dr. Har-

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grave, instead of his son, was to conduct the services; and when he advanced to the pulpit, leaning upon the arm of his son, every eye was fixed upon him, and the silence was intense.

The old doctor was only a spectre of his former self; his naturally tall person was rendered taller by his extreme attenuation. The ashen hue of age, and snow white hair, beard, and eyebrows, gave him a most bizarre appearance. The preliminary services over, he began his discourse, addressing the crowd as follows:

"My dear children—It has been a long, long time since I last stood before you, and looked in your dear faces. This is a privilege I never expected to enjoy again, and I do not believe, my dear friends, that I could be equal to it if I were not sustained by the Almighty himself. I stand upon the very brink of the chasm which divides time from eternity; and here as a dying man, in the very presence of Death in his saddest and most appalling form, I wish to preach my last sermon; to deliver to you my last warning; to give you my last message; which, unless grossly self-deceived, I believe is sent to you by God himself. You see how heavily age has lain its hand upon me. I am but a wreck of my former self, eyesight dimmed, all my senses blunted, physical strength gone, reduced to almost childlike helplessness. Yet, my friends, as the hold of this weak, worn-out old body becomes less upon the spirit, as this physical recedes, as the veil between the seen and unseen becomes thinner, I do believe I have greater spiritual liberty and strength, and I believe I see things now that were not apparent to me when clogged

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by grosser appetite, and grosser nature; and looking backward over my past life, I fear I have been a negligent watchman on the tower. And that having preached the gospel to other, I may eventually become a castaway.

"Look at these two coffins, my dear friends, and learn from them the fleeting, the perishing, the evanescent nature of all temporal affairs; and learn, too, how little real importance attaches to the things which are seen, which so fill all our senses, in which we are so entirely engrossed as to exclude the hidden things of the spirit, about which the best of us are so little concerned, giving them so little of our time and attention. And yet, my dear friends, these things which I fear too many of us, even professed Christians, in our hearts condemn and despise, are the issues of life and death.

"In my pastoral intercourse with you in the past, I fear I have not impressed upon you with sufficient clearness and force, the simple, beautiful, all-important truths of the scripture; the cares of this world, the pleasures of this world, the follies and pursuits of this world, all, have an almost irresistible tendency to blind our spiritual senses, and to fix our thoughts upon the vanishing and perishing things of time, rather than upon the glorious realities of the future, and if I, your pastor, your spiritual adviser, in looking backward, have reason to believe that I have been rendered negligent of duty by these seductive agencies, and have failed to declare to you God's word in its simplicity and power, I fear you have fallen under a like condemnation. Be not deceived, my

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beloved friends. All earthly interests pale and sink into utter insignificance, when opposed to the religion of Jesus Christ. Every pursuit, every thought of our hearts, every feeling of our nature should be secondary, and held in abeyance to this great and glorious religion."

After the lapse of all these years the people of Windemere thought it the most powerful and impressive sermon they had ever listened to, and it is even now referred to by some of the old inhabitants as a solemn message from the world of spirits.

He took a seat in one of the chairs belonging to the pulpit, and resting his elbow on the arm of the chair, leaned his head upon his hand. The organ in low sweet tones breathed forth a beautiful old tune, and the voices solemnly joined in. It was touching and very sweet, and at its close Dr. Hargrave touched the arm of his father, who still sat in the chair, his head leaning upon his hand; he did not move.

The doctor arose and looked earnestly in his father's face. The old man was dead. Dr. Hargrave beckoned to Dr. McLeod, and together they reverently laid him upon the pulpit sofa. Then Dr. Hargrave addressed the people:

"My dear old father has passed away," said the good doctor. "He has indeed preached his last sermon, conveyed his last warning, and given you his last message. His work in this world is over, and he has gone to his reward." The services were concluded at the grave by the junior Dr. Hargrave.

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CHAPTER V.

THESE two deaths so near together, so tragic and unexpected, were stunning blows to the heads of the old estate and one from which they never recovered. They were not quite childless, however. Moncure, the youngest son, after graduating in this country had gone to Europe; thence to Scotland, and after completing his studies in Edinburgh, went on a visit to his father's relations in the north of Scotland. Though only twenty-two years old he wrote to his mother and father that he was engaged to be married to a Miss Lowrie, a distant relation of his father. His father, knowing something of the Lowries, was rather pleased, and did not discourage him. They were a very highly connected, wealthy, and aristocratic family, and Miss Lowrie, though quite young, was much admired, and petted by the society in which she moved. This was before the days of submarine telegraphy, and rapid ocean transit. Steam vessels were taking the place of sailing ones, but it still took several days to cross the Atlantic. So Frank and Eustace were dead and buried before the tidings of Frank's death reached Moncure. He was deeply distressed and wanted Mary to marry him and accompany him home. She consented,

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they were quietly married, and started the next day for their home in Virginia.

Mrs. De Wilton was very beautiful. Her figure was graceful and girlish.

She had a profusion of dark red hair, lovely deep blue eyes, her complexion was as pure as the lilies of the field, with just enough of *couleur de rose* to enhance her loveliness. Add to this that she possessed a pretty little fortune of her own, and another in prospect, and you can form some idea of Dr. Moncure De Wilton's good fortune in the highly important matter of selecting a partner for life. He with his slight, graceful person, dark hair and eyes, studious, refined face, formed quite a contrast to her.

The boys had been buried only a month when the young people arrived at Windemere. They found father and mother plunged into profound grief, and Dr. Moncure was surprised at the change in both that a few short months had made. They loved their children with no ordinary love, and the tragic fate of Frank, and the sudden death of Eustace breaking in so rudely upon the long established tradition and usage of the old family, were more than they could bear.

They however received the doctor and his wife with the utmost tenderness. With wonderful adaptability and tact Mrs. Moncure dropped into the ways and into the hearts of those unhappy and lonely old people at once. Dr. Moncure, student and book worm as he was, tried, under the gentle insistence of his better half, to assume all the burdens and troubles of the old estate, and make his parents as comfortable as possible. It

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was not long before our young people were very popular and much admired in Windemere. But kind and gentle as their treatment of the old people was, Dr. Moncure and his young wife could not lift their burden of sorrow, loss and grief. Their interest in the affairs of this world was over, and early in the fall, only three months after the arrival of their son and daughter, Mrs. Florence Moncure De Wilton was laid in the grave by her sons.

She had her faults, as we all have; pride of position, pride of family, and pride of wealth were the chief ones; but love for her husband and children almost atoned for them.

McKenzie De Wilton did not long survive his wife, but early in the spring, before any indications of its approach were apparent, he too was borne to the old church yard, and placed beside his faithful wife, and Doctor De Wilton and his wife reigned in their stead. Dr. Moncure is a very young monarch indeed to have charge of so large an estate and so much money, and the welfare of so many fellow creatures in his hands.

Dr. Moncure and his wife attended church regularly, and took an active part in the Sunday school, and the doctor frequently gave the children and church pretty scholarly lectures upon various portions of the Bible. Their bereavement was too recent for them to take any active part in the gayeties of the neighborhood, but the better class of these people called upon them and were much pleased with the doctor and his beautiful wife. They were very affable, and great favorites, the doctor particularly so with the wealthy, and the

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ambitious, hustling people of the neighborhood. His wife was popular with rich and poor alike; the poor of the estate rather stood in awe of the doctor, they did not come up and shake hands with him, or talk fully and familiarly with him, and tell their griefs and troubles as they had done with the former De Wiltons. On the contrary, the poorest on the estate, even the poor African felt free to bring their troubles to his wife. There was nothing about this woman to invite coarse familiarity. She was fully as aristocratic in feeling as her husband, even more so, and no one could look at her without knowing that she was a lady born. Yet there was something about her which attached the poor and unfortunate, and these poor creatures knew by intuition that she was their friend. Consequently the troubles of this old estate were poured into her gentle bosom, and no one could have received them with more tender sympathy than did this sweet lady. She had troubles of her own which were much harder to bear, as she had to nurse them in secret.

She married Moncure De Wilton because she loved him; she thought him the noblest, most learned, and religious young man she had ever seen. Her love for him had idealized him in her mind, and, in fact, her eyes were holden. She had, in her romantic, high toned girlish attachment for him, invested him with many noble qualities entirely foreign to his nature. She did not detect some very glaring faults in him until after she had taken him for better or for worse; then as their intercourse had become less constrained, little traits of character began to manifest them-

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selves in him that surprised, and humiliated, and hurt her deeply. She knew he had family pride, but its manifestations were of a small and narrow kind she could not account for, and to her very great surprise, she found him selfish, close, and foolishly particular.

Poor girl, her idol had fallen; she was thoroughly disillusioned, and yet she still loved the man, and not to her dearest friend would she have admitted the bitter disappointment she had experienced, and in her own heart she was constantly trying to invent excuses for him. He, however, loved his wife, and was doing what he could in his way to make her happy. She made what changes in the old house she chose, and in the few months she had been there she had beautified and changed the interior until she would scarcely have known it.

She possessed wonderful taste both in caring for her own person and arranging her habitation; and under her magic wand the old place had been converted into one of the handsomest country seats in Virginia, if not in the United States, as it had been one of the most substantial. Her carriages, her horses, and her appointments were as elegant as they could be, and if she had been of the "earth earthy;" if she had been an ordinary woman, with ordinary aspirations, with ordinary selfishness, with ordinary worldliness, she would have been a happy woman. What does the average woman of society care for her husband's faults provided he can supply her every want? What does she care for his selfishness and injustice to

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others if he enables her to live a life of gayety, and pleasure seeking and show?

But Mrs. De Wilton, girl as she was, was possessed of a bright, brave spirit. She had not given away to blues, or become hysterical because a little disappointed in the man she had married, because instead of a god she found she had married a very weak man of clay.

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CHAPTER VI.

BUT midst her trials and troubles there came a great consolation to Mrs. De Wilton ; she was about to become a mother. Why, with our experience of life and its vicissitudes and troubles and heart-aches, should we wish to propagate our species, to bring children into this unfeeling world? I suppose it is an instinct implanted in the female heart by God himself; and certainly a woman knows no greater joy after courtship and marriage than that of giving birth to a "proper child," and the sweeter, the purer, the nobler a woman is, the nearer she is allied to the spirit world, the more cleansed from the dross of this, the greater will be the pleasure, the stronger will be her maternal instincts.

To do Dr. Wilton justice he was much gratified too; he wanted an heir to his great name and possessions, and he looked forward very anxiously to the period of its arrival.

One night as the stars began to pale under the grey twilight of a winter's morning, Mary De Wilton forgot her agony, forgot the long night of anguish, in the glad knowledge that a man child had been born into the world. She had now something to live for, and in discharging the double duties of wife and mother, she could not

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be very unhappy, for no woman in all this broad land loved her husband or child more deeply or truly than she. Dr. Moncure was a proud and happy father. For some inscrutable, but wise reason, it had pleased God to bless him far above his fellow men, far above the members of his own family. He had fixed his heart upon having a son and heir, and his wish had been granted. Mrs. De Wilton, anxious to honor her husband, proposed calling the baby after him, and after her own family; but when the proposal was made the doctor met it with the strongest opposition. He said that under the excellent training the child would receive he did not see why he should not become the most distinguished and honorable man the De Wilton family had ever produced, and he proposed to name him after the most enterprising man in the family—Sir Ralph.

Mrs. De Wilton and Anna McLeod, the fiancée of unfortunate Frank De Wilton, became great friends. They walked and rode together, and were inseparable companions. The color gradually returned to Anna's cheek, the light to her eye, the smile to her lip. She attended church once more, and went to see her friends with Mrs. De Wilton, and after spending a month with her new friends, she returned to her home, to all outward appearances the same pretty, attractive Anna McLeod that she was in Frank's palmiest days. Sometimes she looked a little sad when something reminded her of Frank, but these spells were transient, and became more infrequent as the days went by. Time, that wonderful healer of human woes, and a marvelously short time, too, in Anna's

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case, had done its work, and had relegated Frank, if not to the shades of oblivion, to those of indifference.

Mrs. Moncure was a little surprised in her heart at the readiness with which Anna had put aside her grief, at her bidding, but she was not prepared for the drama of real life. It was discovered that Anna had a new lover named Frank, who did not resemble the old one in anything but name. Two boys more dissimilar in appearance, manners, tastes, and in families could not have been found, than Frank De Wilton and Frank McTavish. I think Anna's mother was more to blame for her inconstancy than she herself.

About six months after the death of Frank Mrs. McLeod became very uneasy about Anna's situation. She said she was continually moping around, that she saw no pleasure, that she was losing flesh, and feared she would go into a decline; that it was wrong and sinful for a girl to give way to her feelings as Anna was doing; that she owed it to her friends, to society, and to her church to curb and control these feelings, and take some interest in her surroundings.

Summer had again visited Windemere, and a cooler, pleasanter resort could not be imagined than the village of Windemere, and the surrounding mountain region. Many people from the city had already begun to seek its cool, shady retreats, but there was one lady "to the manner born" who thought a change of air and scene indispensable to the health of her daughter. Mrs. McLeod had in June confided to her husband the fact that Anna's health and spirits were such as to require

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a change of air and scene, and that she should take her during the summer to a very fashionable watering place, some distance farther on in the mountains.

One fine hot morning in July, she and Anna accompanied by a maid and an immense amount of baggage, took their departure.

The morning after arriving at the Springs Mrs. McLeod and Anna were taking a drive when they met two gentlemen handsomely dressed, driving a pair of very showy horses. As they passed Mrs. McLeod said: "These men seem to know us, and have a familiar look about them. Do you know them, Anna?"

"Yes, mother," replied Anna, "the one driving is Frank McTavish, and the gentleman sitting by him, I think is Mr. Nelson, our State Senator."

"How long has Frank McTavish been keeping company with senators?" asked Mrs. McLeod.

"Oh, he is a very staunch friend of Mr. Nelson, mother, and don't you remember his driving him and Mr. Ewell to Windemere when we had the political meeting, and they both spoke?"

"Yes," said her mother, "I believe I do remember something of it, now. Frank is really a dashing looking young fellow, and moves in a much better circle than I ever supposed he would."

"Oh, well, mother," said Anna, "you know old Mr. Bill McT. is wealthy, and he has raised Frank to be a great horse man, and he is naturally impudent, and where won't impudence and money take a man now?"

Anna was by no means as unsophisticated as she looked, but right well up in worldly wisdom for

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her age. That night a large ball was given at the Springs. Anna and her mother attended, and Mr. Nelson, the Senator, sought the earliest opportunity of being introduced to mother and daughter. He soon informed them of a friend, a young gentleman of great merit and almost from their own neighborhood, who was very anxious to be introduced. Frank was brought and presented, and Anna McLeod and her mother had travelled three hundred miles, and had subjected themselves to much trouble and expense to accomplish what the least hint, the slightest encouragement from either would have brought about at home, for up to that time Frank had never dreamed that he would be tolerated by the McLeods.

But Frank's team was acknowledged to be the finest there; he was not an ill looking fellow, although flashily dressed. Anna was envied her fine beau and fine turnout by many stranger ladies, and no more eligible party offering, when Anna and her mother left the Springs Frank was her accepted suitor. Frank McTavish was the only child of old Bill McTavish, who early in McKenzie De Wilton's occupancy, came to Windemere, and started a butchering business. Buying his first beef of McKenzie De Wilton on credit, by constant industry, and other means less creditable, it was said, he soon managed to get a little property around him. McKenzie De Wilton employed him to go west or south and buy cattle or sheep for his estates; and seeing better opportunities for the exercise of his talent in this business he employed an agent or partner to run the butchering, and devoted his time to buying cattle, and speculat-

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ing generally. Bill McTavish made an ideal cattle man. He bought of a poor old woman who had raised her steer, and a nice one, from a calf, as he would deal with the sharpest business man. Bill bought as low as he possibly could. When he sold it was done at the highest possible price, irrespective of the character and business qualities of those he dealt with. He dealt a little in other people's paper, and turned an honest penny in that way, and when he purchased a large and very fertile farm, just across the river from Windemere, he used a large sum of money intrusted to him by McKenzie De Wilton and others to pay for it, and by a dexterous use of the machinery of the laws of that period he was enabled to hold his ill gotten gains, and escape all penalties.

One would naturally suppose that Bill McTavish would be a man of very small consequence in his own neighborhood, and among those who knew him intimately; but I regret to admit that this was not the case.

Frank McTavish was a florid faced young man, with light hair, was rather heavy set, but fairly good looking. He had been educated at a boarding-school, and had a more pleasant manner and address than his father, but he talked loud, and was self-assertive, and much given to bluster.

*"Take the bright shell from its home on the lea,
And wherever it goes it will sing of the sea."*

And so by a little metaphor and poetic stretch of the imagination, we can apply this couplet to a fellow creature, and very generally one can size

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up an individual, male or female, by their talk. The clerk talks office, the doctor physic, the sexton of burying the dead, though a rather gruesome subject to most of us; and a man of Frank's type will invariably talk horse, cattle, or local politics (if given the opportunity), and the accumulation of the almighty dollar, the four things in this world that interest him most; he was also very fond of show and pleasure seeking; he drove and rode fine horses, took an active part in all the trickery and chicanery of local politics, and was as keen and unscrupulous in his dealings with his fellow men as his father before him, and this was the man that Anna McLeod had promised to marry. True, it is rather soon. She is scarcely nineteen. The fate of her former lover very tragic, and they professed to be so devoted to each other. Does not her conduct look a little precipitate, a little unfeeling? But suppose it does, this is an age of push and progress. Life is short at best, and in love affairs as in everything else, we must "let the dead bury their dead," lest in moping and brooding and grieving over the past we miss our next golden opportunity. Our duty to the living, our duty to ourself, and our duty to one's church and society demand this of us. These were the sentiments, reader, of one wiser and better than either you or I.

Anna's mother expressed them very freely to her many acquaintances and friends in and about Windemere, who generally agreed with her to her face, and amused themselves at her expense and Anna's when her back was turned, as people's friends usually do. Anna's heartlessness and haste, and the difference in the two Franks, and

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their respective families, were very severely commented upon, and Dr. McLeod, her father, who it was thought disapproved very much of Anna's coolness and composure, and perfect indifference to what the people might think or say of her, alone deserved sympathy. She met her friends with perfect *sang froid*.

Even Dr. De Wilton, when meeting her could not make her blush, though he gave her one of those severe, incisive glances through his spectacles, which few could withstand.

But Anna, with her mother's expression, with her mother's own eyes would coolly and calmly look the doctor out of countenance every time, and this enraged and annoyed him far more than her forgetting Frank. But there was one exception, one person whom poor Anna could never meet with coolness and carelessness, as she did all the rest; when she in her morning and evening drives chanced to encounter Mrs. De Wilton. Seated by Frank, behind his handsome blacks or his black and white tandem team, and Mrs. De Wilton usually driving her white ponies, with her little boy and nurse by her side, Anna's face would at once change, the likeness to her mother would fade out, and gentle, earnest, appealing eyes would look from her pretty countenance, and a deep blush would mantle her face to the very roots of her hair.

One evening a short time before her marriage, Anna was returning to the village afoot, and when on the bridge alone she met Mrs. Moncure, who was returning home from the village, also walking. When Anna saw the lady she paused as though undecided what to do. Then she approached her

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rapidly, took her hands in hers, knelt upon the dusty floor of the bridge, pressed them to her lips, and covered them with tears. She then arose, sobbing as if her heart would break, and walked rapidly on toward the village. Mrs. Moncure, for the moment dazed and bewildered at this strange and affecting little episode, looked after her. She called to her twice, and started to follow her, but she was walking so fast that she gave it up and retraced her steps homeward.

The next evening she called at Dr. McLeod's to see Anna, but Mrs. McLeod received her and told her she was too busy to see any one; but Mrs. Moncure was not to be thus discouraged, so she wrote Anna a note telling her how sincerely she was her friend, and if there was anything she could do for her to feel no hesitation in letting her know it.

She never received a reply to this note, and as Anna studiously avoided her, she was never thrown with her again until long after her marriage. What could this little bridge scene have meant, and why should Anna have treated Mrs. Moncure so differently from her other friends? Did she feel any regret at the course she was pursuing? If so she concealed it bravely.

Soon after they were married, and after an extensive bridal tour Frank and his charming young bride settled on the fair estate his father had recently purchased. The house, a very fine one, had been put into thorough repair, and as Dr. McLeod had given Anna a handsome sum of money, she and Frank seemed to be most propitiously started upon the "road to happiness and bliss," and judging from appearances they have

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had a most enjoyable life. Everything has been made smooth for them; even "grim visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front," as far as they were concerned, and while scattering death and destruction all around them, Frank and his family were prosperous and happy during its continuance. Frank was popular with both sides. It was claimed for him that while frequently crossing the Potomac river, and having constant dealings with the Federals, he was secretly the friend of the South, and gave his section valuable information. He was also the means of many women running the blockade, and getting supplies for the Southern army, and when the war was over Frank was many thousand dollars better off than when it began, and was looked upon as an all round good fellow by the people.

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CHAPTER VII.

DURING the last six years Time has dealt gently with Mrs. Moncure De Wilton. She has more than fulfilled the promise of her girlhood, and Dr. De Wilton, fortunate in everything, possessed the loveliest woman for a wife in all the country side. She has had her troubles, her bitter disappointments, but these have only refined and softened her as the gold is refined and purified by the crucible.

Her radiant sweet smile was not as frequent now, or as easily called forth as in her girlhood, but when it visited her countenance, it seemed actually to glorify her, so pure, so sweet, so spiritual was it; her person was fuller, more developed, and more beautiful; and her manner perfectly easy and natural was full of sweetness and grace and none of the De Wilton name were ever more popular than Mrs. Moncure. The poor were devoted to her, and she tried as far as her limited means would go to make up for the shortcomings and deficiency of her husband. Even an erring sister's shame claimed tears from this sweet woman, and she did not confine her sympathy to tears, but helped these poor unfortunates in the way she thought would most conduce to their benefit.

But I must tell you of the revolutions and

changes that had visited Windemere within the period of six brief years. The breaking up of the old régime, the sudden taking off of Eustace, the death of the old people following so closely, and the accession of the younger son to the occupancy of the old estate, had started changes and reforms which were indeed a surprise, and an unpleasant one to most of the people. Dr. Moncure had quite different views of his duties and responsibilities in the management of the estate from those entertained by any of his predecessors.

In fact the De Wiltons had handed down the policy with the estate from generation to generation, until the people had become so accustomed to it that they thought it could not be changed. Dr. De Wilton began his occupancy by a careful examination of the pay roll of the estate; he found the compensation allowed the laborers entirely too liberal, and carefully scaled their wages down to prices to suit the times. He said he believed in conducting business upon business principles. When he had anything to give he would give it, but business was business, and charity was charity, and he did not believe in mixing the two, as his ancestors had done through long generations. This excited a great deal of murmuring and complaint among those affected; but what could they do?

The outside world was doing no better by its laborers and employees than Dr. De Wilton proposed to do for his. Windemere had been their home for generations, and bitterly as they complained, they endured it as best they could. The doctor also carried out his views as to the poor

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of the estate. He erected a handsome alms house, where all the economies were carefully studied, placed it under the control of a shrewd business man, and collected the deserving poor of the estate and cared for them there.

The doctor's investigation had convinced him that many were upon the charity rolls of the estate wrongfully, and these were promptly dropped. There was also a very strong aversion upon the part of these people to accept the doctor's charity in this form. Some moved into the houses of their friends; some left and went no one knew where, and some old people, overly sensitive and entirely destitute, chose to remain in their little cottages or cabins and died, it was rumored, of want, so that the number of the poor the doctor housed in his fine new charitable institution was comparatively small. The doctor was highly complimented for this charity by the *Windemere Herald*, and other local papers, as he was for many others, and his name was frequently mentioned in the religious and secular journals of most importance in that day, as a man of very advanced and liberal Christian philanthropic ideas, and as public mention and laudation of eminent personages was not so frequent then as it is now we may naturally suppose that much greater importance was attached to it.

The doctor was quite a contributor to the medical literature of the day, and he spent a smart little sum in having the paper for which he wrote—*Health Hints*—distributed over his estate to those who were not able to take it.

He also wrote for a religious paper, and was

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equally kind with it to the indigent members of his church. He claimed to be very liberal and broad in his religious tenets, and opened the doors of his village and estates to all other denominations, not that they had been closed before, but as the De Wiltons owned every foot of land comprised in their estates, and would sell none, and as it was believed that they were rather hostile to having other denominations among them they had been slow to come. But when Dr. Moncure took possession of the estates of his fathers, he found one other denomination there besides his own, who, having rented a building had conducted services in Windemere for long years. The doctor sold this denomination a very handsome site for a church in Windemere, and other sects taking advantage of his liberal and non-sectarian views, also bought lots and built churches, until in this short space of time Windemere contained eight denominations instead of two, and as it was a time of great religious excitement, some of our leading sects were upon the eve of disrupting over certain points of doctrine which we believe have never yet been settled. The inhabitants of Windemere from this long debarment from excitement of this nature, rushed into it with a zeal known only to the young and fiery convert. In the streets, stores, and other public resorts the controversy raged, the women taking active part in it. Mrs. McLeod, who had quit her own church, was thoroughly in her element, and threw her large body and larger soul into the controversy with more than ever her accustomed energy, and this hitherto quiet and peace-loving little settlement

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was changed into a seething caldron of religious excitement.

Frank McTavish and Anna, his wife, have seen many changes during the long eventful years which have passed. The Bible says, "Men will praise thee when thou art good to thyself," and this truth was amply exemplified in Frank McTavish's case. Since his marriage he had been an eminently successful man. He took a stronger interest in his farm, grazing, stock, etc., was also a restless, insatiable speculator, and made for himself quite a reputation as a political wire puller. In fact, with the handsome start his father and Dr. McLeod gave him, Frank was accumulating rapidly; he had become a man of such local importance that even Dr. De Wilton thought it best to make a friend of him, and he and the doctor frequently met upon business, and even socially, and Mrs. Moncure, to gratify her husband, had called upon Mrs. Frank and received calls from her. Mrs. Frank had become quite a social success in Windemere. She lived elegantly, was a fine manager, a devoted wife and mother, and quite a society woman. Her equipages and horses were equal to Mrs. De Wilton's, and their children, of whom they had three, two boys and a girl, were very handsome and well behaved.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN the autumn of the year of which I am writing death once more invaded the De Wilton house and took from it the mother's treasure and the father's pride.

Little Ralph De Wilton had fallen sick, and though no human means of restoring him to health had been left untried, it pleased God in His inscrutable and all-wise providence to remove him from this earthly scene, and one lovely evening just after the sun had gone down, as the shadows of twilight were softly stealing into the room, poor little Ralph breathed out his sweet young life upon his mother's bosom.

The grief of Dr. Moncure was very deep, and he seemed to feel for his wife; but can a selfish man lose sight of his selfishness or a worldly man of his worldliness? Will these qualities of the heart not crop out, even in the most inopportune moments, and when we think they are crushed by misfortune and suffering?

The Board of Health had established a new cemetery and abolished the old one.

Mrs. De Wilton loved the old cemetery. It reminded her of a burial place far away in Scotland, where her loved ones and kindred had been buried for long years; its little grassy mounds and humble

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memorials comported with her ideas of simple, unostentatious Christian burial, and the thought of her little boy being buried in the new cemetery, just across the road from old Billy McTavish, cut her to the heart; her whole nature revolted at the thought of having her pure, sinless little one occupy this big, empty place, with no one for company but old Billy McTavish, of whom she had always had a great horror.

Dr. Moncure tried in various ways to soothe her distress, and she thought him very sympathetic. There was a matter very near her heart which she wished to speak of, and with a woman's tact she thought, as the doctor was subdued and softened, this would be the proper time to approach him. So she took his hand, seated herself upon the sofa and drew him down beside her.

"I have a little matter to mention to you," she said; "a little request to make, which I know you will not object to granting." Her voice trembled, her eyes filled with tears. The doctor was very much moved, and told her in the blandest, softest tones that she knew how much pleasure it would give him to do anything he could for her. She thanked him and told him the request was as much little Ralph's as her own.

"You know," said she, "that he and I used frequently to visit the old cemetery together; he became very fond of going there, and only a few days before his illness he told me he wanted to be buried by the side of his uncle Frank in the old cemetery. This request seemed so remarkable in a child of his age that it troubled me all through his illness. Now that he is gone, isn't it our duty

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to respect this, his last, dying wish, and place him where he wished to be, in the cemetery?"

The doctor's face changed in an instant. Its softened expression left it, the gentleness of his manner was all gone, his clasp upon his wife's hand relaxed, he drew his arm from around her, and was his own natural self again.

"I am not surprised," said he in his coldest tone, "at Ralph's talking thus to you upon this or any other unnatural subject. You were raising him to be a dreamer; you were instilling into him an impracticable kind of religion and morality, which would have unfitted him for the discharge of his duties in life. In this age of enlightenment and progress the world has no place for dreamers. It has no place for this old fashioned babyish religion and morality, which you and Dr. Hargrave delight in, and which you were instilling into our little boy. The business of life now requires active, hustling, combative men, and the man who will not stand up for his rights, and enter into a sharp competition with his fellow man must go under. I have never approved of those walks in the old cemetery, and the long hours you and Ralph spent there together, in communion with the dead. I feared it would awaken morbid fancies with the little fellow, and sure enough it has; didn't he know that you were opposed to the new cemetery?"

"I suppose he did," replied the wife, "but I never told him that I was."

"I thought so," replied the doctor; "the child's mind had become morbid. He knew your feelings upon this subject, and under the circumstances

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some such silly childish fancy was to be expected."

"Oh, Moncure!" said his unhappy wife, "how can you talk to me in this way, and our poor little boy lying a corpse in the adjoining room! As God is my judge, I have only tried to inculcate the religion of the Holy Jesus upon my son. I have tried to make him merciful, pitiful, tender, meek and lowly in his feelings, and considerate of those of others in imitation of the meek and lowly One, whom you and I profess to worship. I did not know I was displeasing you in this, but even if I had, what other teachings could I have given him?"

"Well, madam," replied the doctor, "there can be no good in discussing the subject now, but I want to know what possible objection you can have to burying Ralph in the new cemetery? Do you want to separate him from you and me, or do you prefer to lie by Ralph in the old cemetery, and let me be buried by myself in the new one? I must say that I don't understand you at all upon this subject."

"I think," said Mrs. De Wilton, "that our little boy's wish ought to be respected in this matter. I don't think it the morbid fancy of a diseased brain, if you do, but the honest preference of his pure and sinless heart, and as much entitled to respect and observance as your or my dying request would be; and I acknowledge to you that it hurts me to the heart, though I know you think me very foolish, to have my little one occupy that lonely, vacant burial place with no one for company but old Billy McTavish."

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"What can old Billy McTavish have to do with burying my little Ralph in our own lot? I declare, Mary, if you keep on at this rate, you will become as nervous and full of notions as Miss Nutall." (Miss Nutall was an old maid, famed for hysterics and caprice.) Mrs. Moncure's pale face flushed deeply.

"You can taunt and ridicule me as you please, Moncure," she said, "but I would almost as soon die as see poor little Ralph buried where you propose to put him, and I will not have it if I can prevent it; before I will submit to this I will enter my protest at the open grave."

Mrs. De Wilton had never been rebellious to her husband's wishes before, and he was much surprised at her attitude.

"Well, madam," he replied, "I will not have a scene with you over little Ralph's remains, and I suppose I will have to submit to your folly in this matter, but I do it only on account of your health. I don't want you to have one of your nervous spells at the grave."

Dr. De Wilton was taunting this grand woman with having hysterics, when he was really not fit to untie her shoes. As he finished speaking he left the room. As he did so the color faded once more from her flushed face, a look of deep humiliation and shame took its place. She dropped on her knees, pressed her hands to her face and sobbed as if her heart would break. She remained long in this posture, and when she arose from her knees, she touched the bell; when the servant came she asked him to request Dr. De Wilton to

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come to her. When the doctor entered he found her very pale and very sad.

"I have sent for you to tell you that I have reconsidered what I said to you, and am willing for you to bury the little boy where you please."

"I thought you would think better of this, Mary," said Dr. Moncure, always pleased at having his own way.

"No," she said, "I think just as I did before."

"Then why have you changed your determination so soon?" he asked.

"Simply because I have promised and sworn to obey you, and I must keep my word," she replied.

The doctor was not pleased at his wife's reply, but he was never the man to give way under any circumstances, not even to the gentle partner of his bosom, for he was in the most comprehensive sense of the word an egotist. He was right, and every one opposed to him was wrong; he was a supremely selfish man, and his long continued temporal successes in everything he undertook contributed greatly to this unenviable quality.

The Bible tells us that covetousness and avarice and money getting contract and harden the heart, and do we not have constant evidence of the truth of this as we journey through this world?

If Moncure De Wilton had been broken upon the wheel of adversity, if he had travelled the rough, hard paths of the unfortunate, he would probably have been a better husband, a better father, a better neighbor, a better Christian; but God, for some wise reason thought proper to

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prosper him in all that he did, and he, with his worldliness, attributed his success solely to his own wisdom, and he looked with great contempt upon those who were less fortunate in the race of life than himself. This cropped out in the doctor's daily life, and in his public addresses, in the obstinacy with which he clung to his little schemes of every kind, and in the arbitrary manner in which he opposed his opinions to those with whom he happened to differ.

And so Dr. Moncure had his way, and poor, little Ralph was buried in the new cemetery, and his mother, leaning on the arm of the doctor, with pale face and streaming eyes, looked as hopeless as though she had lost her last friend.

Mary De Wilton's earnest, passionate nature had gone out to this little boy, and she loved him as only few mothers can love a child; with a love allied to the love which the brute creation bears to its offspring in intensity and strength, and nearly allied to the spirit world in its sweetness and purity.

Little Ralph and old Billy McTavish kept watch and ward for long months in the lonely new cemetery before they were joined by other company. But time, which assuages our deepest griefs and blunts our bitterest enmities, brought other occupants to this new cemetery.

Slowly they came at first, much more rapidly in later years. The Civil War directly and indirectly gave this city of the dead a powerful impetus. In the earlier portion of it many a poor fellow was brought home in his bloody gray uniform and deposited here. Many a wounded boy

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came back home to die, and victims of typhoid fever and other camp diseases, swelled the lists; then, too, the old people of the country, heart broke fathers and mothers, men with whom desire had failed, those who from various causes connected with this cruel and unnatural war were in despair; so that the new cemetery filled up more rapidly during the four years of the war than it had in its twenty years of prior existence. I call it the new cemetery in contradistinction from the old one, but were you to visit it, you would say it was an old, old one, though really it seems but yesterday to me when its grounds were laid out. But sixty years is a long time, and this was nearly sixty years ago. It is now nearly full, some of the tombstones bear the marks of age, and there is scarcely an unclaimed lot in it.

CHAPTER IX.

In a little more than a year after the death of little Ralph, Mrs. De Wilton again became a mother, and she was grateful for this blessing; but it was not the great joy of her former experience, but a joy tempered by suffering.

As she held the unconscious babe upon her lap tears would frequently mingle with her smiles. She was very proud of her infant, and anxious to call it after her father, whom she regarded as one of the best of men; but the doctor wanted him called Richard after a particularly fortunate member of his mother's family. Mrs. De Wilton was very determined in her opposition to this; so much so that they postponed baptizing the child in consequence. This gave the mother and father, too, a great deal of uneasiness, as they regarded this as very important. So one evening, as the week was closing, she brought up the subject again and begged the doctor to allow the child to be called after her father.

"Why," said the doctor, with his pleasant smile, "you and I have compromised this matter." His wife smiled back at him and asked:

"How and when?"

"Oh," said he, still smiling, "I have recorded

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his name in the Bible as Richard Lowrie; that gives him your name and mine."

Her face flushed to the roots of her hair; an angry, bitter retort rose to her lips, but poor Mary De Wilton had been thoroughly trained in the school of patience, and to have her every wish disregarded. The force of the promise she had made this man when little more than a child was strong upon her still; she bore this with the meekness and humility of the true wife and humble Christian. On the next Sabbath the little boy was baptized as Richard Lowrie, and was known henceforth throughout the estate as Richard De Wilton.

* * * * *

I will take you forward in the history of Windemere about twelve years, which, though placid, quiet years to the people of the United States generally, were fraught with a great deal of change and excitement to this mountain community.

The older De Wiltons, from owning every house and all the land in the village and settlement of Windemere, possessed a great share of power there, and tried to use it for the good of their people. Though they were found fault with by the restless and selfish element, which exist in every community, for keeping alive the old feudal system and restricting free American citizens in their business; they tried to keep down as much as they could the rivalries and heartburnings incident to business. They tried by a judicious system of renting, to confine each man to his particular line, and at the same time to protect their people against extortion. If they had

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reason to believe that a man sold his wares too high, his tenure in Windemere was generally a short one, and if they had reason to think a man not honest he, too, was soon disposed of. They thought they best subserved humanity and the cause of Christianity by encouraging and helping good people, and keeping clear of those who were not correct and honest. The Windemere people for long generations had lived and thriven under this system, and when Dr. Moncure took charge, were as thrifty, as wealthy and as well satisfied a community as the old commonwealth could show. Many of the tenantry of various callings had become rich, and, strange to say, preferred living tenants in Windemere to going elsewhere and buying property of their own.

Under the new system adopted by Dr. De Wilton the restless, aggressive element soon began to assert itself. Mr. McNeveitt, the grocer, riding homeward from a public meeting with the doctor, complimented him "upon his liberal policy," and said he was glad that a progressive man had at last charge of the estate; he was very anxious, he said, to have a room added on to his grocery, and would pay a rental of ten per cent. upon any new building the doctor would add. The McNeveitts had been grocers in Windemere for long years, and had accumulated a nice property. The doctor was pleased with the compliment, and better pleased with the ten per cent. investment offered by Mr. McNeveitt, the fine, large, new storeroom went up like magic, and that fall McNeveitt added a large stock of dry goods and general merchandise of every kind.

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When told of this the doctor said he was glad of it, he believed in competition and emulation. It gave life to a community and cheap goods to the people, and showed that Windemere was not asleep, but in sympathy with the progress of the age. This put the ball in motion, and every business man in Windemere, and outsiders, who, under the new impulse to business and enterprise came flocking into it, went gunning for his neighbor's business. In a little while no one line of goods was kept in any one store in Windemere, but every merchant tried to keep everything that his neighbor kept. A lady visiting them from one of the large cities wrote to her friend that she ought by all means to visit Windemere, it would repay her for the loss of a summer at the seaside or other fashionable summer resort.

"It is the funniest old place you have ever seen. No one merchant is content to keep his own line of goods, but all try to keep everything they can crowd into their stores, and especially everything their neighbor keeps, and this leads to the strangest state of affairs. Only think of my hostess having to go to the druggist for her tin ware, the drygoods store for her groceries and to the butcher and fishmonger for her china and glassware, while I have to go to the barber's shop for my ice cream and cake. Isn't this a most disgusting thought—a barber's shop and ice cream saloon under the same roof, and in the same room, only divided by a curtain. Can such an association of business as this be found outside of Windemere?"

This lady might have added that all the petty

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jealousies and heartburnings incident to such a state of affairs as this, of men's trying to overreach one another, and trying to take the bread from their neighbor's mouths and the clothes from their backs, had been let loose in all their fury and ugliness upon the little village, and the fair-minded, just people of Windemere had already become corrupted and were now a race of bargain hunters. Windemere was only a little in advance of our own times, and this spirit of rivalry and emulation which, unfortunately, had been aroused in it in the forties has become a distinctive feature of our age, so much so as to now excite no surprise.

Richard De Wilton was now eight years old and had the unenviable reputation of being a very bad, wilful boy. His father had in his own mind greatly blamed his wife for her manner of raising little Ralph and thought if he had lived he would, by her gentle raising and tenderness, have developed into a soft, effeminate man, unfitted for the arduous duties and responsibilities which would devolve upon him, and so he determined in a great measure to take the training and management of Richard into his own hands; to apply his pet theories in his particular case. But almost from his babyhood there had been a strong antagonism between Richard and his father. When an infant in arms he would not allow his father to hold him, while he clung to his mother with dog-like fidelity and love. As he grew larger and older this feeling survived, only held in abeyance by his mother's entreaties and commands. She impressed upon his mind that he must love and reverence his father and obey him in every-

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thing; she told him what a good man his father was, and that when he whipped him or was harsh to him it was only for his own welfare, and so, for her sake, he tried to love and obey him; but truth compels me to admit that Richard was a wild, wilful boy, though not bad in the sense the people of Windemere wanted to apply to him.

His mother had early tried to impress upon his young mind the truths and teachings of Scripture. Richard, an earnest enthusiast from his birth, listened to and admired and tried in his irregular, impulsive, boyish way to profit by what she told him; one of her earliest teachings to him was that he must not resist evil; she told him of Christ's sufferings upon earth; told him of his command to his followers to walk in his footsteps, and when the one cheek was buffeted to turn the other. Richard was deeply interested in this account as told by his mother, and promised to follow Christ's example and teachings in his future conduct with boys and men, and he faithfully kept his promise, though it subjected him to many insults, much ridicule and even blows from the boys of the school and village, all of whom began to presume upon Richard's non-combativeness, and when he would come home heavy eyed and sad of heart and tell his mother the indignities and humiliations he had had to put up with in following her advice and keeping his promise, she would be deeply grieved and hurt over it, and feel the deepest sympathy for her poor boy, but with her whole heart she was a Christian and felt that she could give him no other advice than that she had given.

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One day, in passing the schoolhouse yard Dr. Moncure heard a voice in a dense grove just above the schoolhouse. Always full of curiosity, he dismounted from his horse and carefully approached the spot. Judge of his surprise when he found his son on his knees earnestly praying to God. His face was wet with tears and every now and then a sob escaped him. The doctor broke in upon his devotions and asked him why he was crying so. His eyes dried in an instant, and he showed a great reluctance to talk, but after his father repeated his question several times, he told him that Fergus McDonald had abused him and finally struck him.

"Fergus," replied the doctor, "is a little older and a little larger than you, but were you too great a coward to strike him back? I don't think that of my son."

Richard's face flushed deeply.

"I am not a coward, father," said he, "and not afraid of Fergus McDonald or any other boy."

"Well," said the doctor, "it looks like it. Instead of coming here and going on your knees and praying and crying over it, why didn't you knock him down first and pray afterward?"

"Mother tells me," the boy replied, "never to make light of holy things; she says it is right to pray whenever you are in trouble."

"Oh, well," said the doctor, "I suppose it is, but you must help yourself first, and then if you fail, ask God to help you."

"And ought I to ask God to help me whip Fergus?" said Richard.

"Oh," answered the doctor, "this is not a time

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or place to discuss these things, but if you don't go back to school and whip Fergus between this and night you are no son of mine, and I will whip you severely when you come home."

The boy hesitated a moment and then replied: "I am under a solemn promise not to fight."

"And to whom have you given this promise?"

"To mother," replied the boy.

The doctor was very much worried.

"I thought," said he, "that your mother had been filling your mind with this sickening, namby pamby stuff."

"Father," said the boy, "I don't want to say a disrespectful word to you, but you should not talk so of mother; she says you are one of the best and noblest men living; tells me always to obey your commands and treat you with the greatest love and respect. She is a lady and a Christian, a better one than you or I, or anyone else in this world; she would lose her right hand before she would say anything of this kind of you, and especially to her own son."

The little fellow's lip trembled and twitched with emotion and the tears were once more in his bright blue eyes. Dr. Moncure was touched, and took this rebuke from his little son kindly.

"I have been too fast, Richard," he said. "I know your mother is a noble woman. I don't mean to say an unkind word of her, but she has peculiar notions upon this subject; impracticable notions, that if you follow out, will make a girl of you instead of a boy."

"But," said the little boy, "she gets these no-

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tions from the Bible, and you believe in the Bible, don't you?"

"Certainly I do," said the doctor, "but your mother takes it too literally. She carries these things to extremes."

"But," said the child, "she only quotes Christ's own commands."

"Well," said the doctor, annoyed at his little boy's persistency, "you are too young to understand these things; but you come of a brave, high-spirited people, you have good blood in your veins, but no man or boy will be thought well of who does not take his own part and fight his own battles. You go back to the school grounds and whip Fergus or make him beg your pardon. The boys will then let you alone, and if you don't do this they will make a complete fun bundle of you, and you will soon not be able to show yourself in the school or village. Everybody will laugh at and hoot you, and every girl will turn up her nose at you. Won't this be a pretty condition for Richard De Wilton—my own son—to come to?"

"Well, father," said Richard slowly, "do you command me to fight Fergus?"

"Certainly I do," replied the doctor. "Strike him in the stomach with all your force; strike him in the face; and if you still can't whip him, pick up a stone and knock him down with it, and the boys will let you alone and be glad to have you for a friend."

How much easier it is to incite even the best of us to do evil than to do good; how prone to it we are by nature, and how we seek for a pretext to do as this old, fallen nature prompts us to.

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The few words spoken by his father to this little boy, had destroyed all the earnest, practical, faithful teachings the mother had bestowed upon him. He was no longer the humble, Christian child pleading with his God; bringing his burden to him and asking his help and direction; no longer leaving vengeance to him, but the embodiment of self-help, self-sufficiency, and the worst passions of a fallen, evil nature.

"Well," said he, looking at his father, "mother tells me to obey your commands, and as you tell me to fight Fergus, I will fight him and whip him, too. I am not afraid of every McDonald that lives or ever has lived."

Oh, Richard! Richard!

He turned slowly from his father, a fierce, aggressive light burning in his eyes, a deep, hectic flush upon each cheek, a heavy frown upon his brow and his lips compressed into the firmness and hardness of manhood. Every bit of childishness and sweetness had gone out of that little face, and had his mother met him, she had scarcely recognized her son. The doctor mounted his horse, smiling and well pleased with his work. He knew from Richard's changed appearance what he was going to do. Richard walked on very deliberately to the playground, where the girls were having a game of marbles and the boys were sitting in a kind of circle looking on. None raised their eyes as Richard approached. He walked up to where Fergus was sitting and lightly leaping over his head, kicked his hat off. Fergus looked up at him, and as he caught sight of his face, turned very pale.

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"What did you do that for?" he asked Richard.

"I did it to let you know I wanted a little talk with you," was Richard's reply. "Come out here!"

"No," said Fergus, contemptuously, "you are not worth talking to."

"I'll show you whether I am or not, you d——d bully and coward, you," was Richard's reply, and the next moment he slapped Fergus in the face, first with one hand and then with the other. He was a small boy, but strong and withy, and the sharp, unexpected slap he gave Fergus brought the blood to his face and the tears to his eyes.

"Oh," said Fergus, "you want a dressing down, do you, young man? Well, I am the boy to give it to you."

"Don't brag until you have done it," said Richard.

The girls were very much frightened and threatened to tell Dr. Hargrave, but the boys begged them not to do this. Richard and Fergus and the other boys went behind the schoolhouse to settle the difficulty, and the girls, like a frightened covey of birds, huddled together waiting to hear the worst. About an hour after this a little, soiled, battered figure could be seen wending its way toward "The Hall." It was a little boy in a most pitiable condition—both eyes dreadfully swollen and very black, a smart cut upon his cheek, from which the blood had trickled copiously down his face upon his collar and stained his clothing. His smart little suit covered with dirt and dust until you could not have told of

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what it was made. His little hands were grimy and blood stained, and altogether he was a sad and miserable looking little specimen of humanity. And this was little Richard De Wilton returning from his first foughten field. But does Richard need sympathy?

Is there not a glance of triumph from those swollen, bloodshot eyes? Is there not the swagger of victory in his gait?

Richard is at this moment, despite his wounds, his bruises and dilapidated condition, a wonderfully happy boy. He has had his first taste of human applause; has won his first victory. In fact Richard is a hero. He had boldly attacked a boy three years older than himself and much larger, the bully of the school and village; a fiercer or longer continued fight was never witnessed upon a school ground, and, though badly punished himself, by following the instructions of his good father he had succeeded in punishing Fergus severely.

Not until Richard came within sight of his own home did one thought of his mother cross his mind. He knew what he had done would pain and grieve her, and he could not bear to think of encountering those sad, sweet, reproachful eyes.

He slipped noiselessly into the house. His mother's room door was open. He walked quietly to his mother's door, and was just passing it when her quick eye caught a passing glimpse of him. It was not his time to be away from school, and she arose hastily and entered his room. Richard's condition shocked and startled her inexpressibly. Soiled and bloody as he was, she took him upon

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her lap and made him tell her the whole story. She drew him to her bosom and sobbed over him and moaned out in her anguish:

"Oh, my boy! My baby boy! How could your father have given you this advice; how could he have made you engage in this cruel, wicked, sinful fight?"

Then she bathed his wounds, changed his clothing and held him upon her lap until he went to sleep.

The next meeting between Richard and his father was quite different. The news of his exploit was soon known all over the estate. The doctor heard of it in the village soon after it occurred. When he met him that evening he beamed upon him with his sweetest smile; told him how he could whip Fergus if he would try, and said he had proved himself to be a true De Wilton, and "rest assured," said the doctor, "that for the future the boys of Windemere will let you alone." And so they did.

That one little episode gave Richard the belt. He took the place Fergus had occupied, and from that time forward his poor mother could see a great change for the worse in him. He lost his taste for Bible reading. The simple, beautiful teachings of this good woman had no longer any charms for him. The beautiful little stories she used to tell him, derived from this book, and which had so interested him, now fell upon dull, unheeding ears. He lost all interest in the Sunday school, of which he had been fond, and became wilder and fonder of evil companionship every day he lived, though not a bully, in the vulgar

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sense of the word. He became the leading spirit of a set of idle, worthless boys of the neighborhood and village. He was looked up to on account of his position, and on account of his prowess, too. He ran much with Indian youths, and though more talked about for this than for all his other delinquencies, they were really the least injurious and the most innocent companions he had, except his servant, Richard Arnold.

Four years had nearly elapsed since Richard's first pugilistic encounter. He was about twelve years old, and they have been years of retrogression for Richard, morally, and years of heart-ache and sadness for his gentle mother. She did not despair, but poured out her tears to God and to Christ for him. Nothing dishonorable was alleged against Richard, but he would not study; he would not even read. He was a great huntsman, a wild, reckless rider, fond of horse racing and all other sport, and boy as he was, it was said he could stand up under as much spirits as a man. He was accused of being not unfamiliar with the gaming table, and Dr. De Wilton did not write or speak upon the training of children as he used to. He had tried all his pet theories with Richard and had become silent, for they were abortive.

CHAPTER X.

FRANK MCTAVISH and his better half—for rumor had given to Anna that credit, as it had done her mother before her—had really in this lapse of time become very important people. Frank had become a shrewd politician; he knew how to play upon the feelings and impulses of the average man. He sometimes took the stump, and, though neither profound, brilliant or witty, he generally managed to amuse the crowd and gain more votes than more able speakers.

Dr. De Wilton was a strong friend of Frank; there was much in common between these two men, though the difference of their birth and training prevented their ever being very intimate, and Frank, after having discharged the duties of magistrate, handling many estates for his neighbors as fiduciary, and acting in other public capacities, had been elected to the Virginia legislature, and was now the Honorable Frank McTavish. This honor came to Frank at a most opportune moment, just when his very pretty and amiable little family were blossoming into maturity, the time of all others when the fond parents who have been financially successful in this world are anxious for social distinction. They had

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five children. Miss Anna McLeod McTavish, the eldest, was a very pretty girl; William McLeod McTavish was also a fine looking boy, and the three others—two girls and a boy—completed this interesting family. Anna had taken great pains in their bringing up, and had tried hard to fit them for laying up treasure in this world and the next, too. Either of the little boys would beg a little, mangy pig of a neighbor or take the runt from their father's barnyard and at killing time would probably have as large or larger porker of their unpromising beginnings than Frank himself. They had wonderful ideas of traffic and trade almost from the cradle, which were carefully fostered and encouraged by their parents.

Frank took great pride in these little characteristics of his children, and when electioneering would frequently boast of them while sitting by his neighbor's fireside. He often referred to them in his political speeches, and his neighbors took quite an interest in these little stories of Frank, because it showed how fond he was of his family. The little boys, and girls, too, all had their first penny, and were able to show snug little sums laid up in pennies and small sums given by parents and friends. Bright contrasts they made, in these respects, to poor, reckless Richard De Wilton, who did not know the use of money at all, and would give his last penny to the wayside beggar or any one else whom he thought wanted it more than he did. A season in a great city made great changes in the children. Frank and Anna at once became prominent people in legislative and social circles. They were frequent guests of promi-

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ment political people. Miss Anna McLeod McTavish and her mother were frequently mentioned in the papers; their elaborate gowns and jewelry duly described and commented upon, until the ladies of Windemere actually turned green with envy, and Frank's business qualifications, industry and talent, and loyalty to his constituents and watchfulness over their interests, were also subjects of frequent public mention. Frank was an active, progressive man, and had the nineteenth century longing for printers' ink and newspaper notoriety, and their puffs, while they gratified his vanity, benefited him with the people. This system of promiscuous notoriety was then in its infancy, and as our big and little people, too, were brought before the public, in that way much less frequently than now, it was proportionally more effective; and, Frank, when he returned home from his official duties met his old neighbors and friends very genially and pleasantly; but he was not the same man. His manner now was somewhat patronizing, his air more dignified; in fact, he had more of the great man about him than formerly.

Young Anna was a great belle, in Windemere, and rather enjoyed the detraction and envy which her popularity excited. She was a very pretty woman, and though a little reflection should have convinced the young men of Windemere that she was not for them, they did not seem able to exercise any, but hovered around her like moths around a candle, and gave the other girls the go by. There were better girls and prettier girls too, in Windemere and its neighborhood, and

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more accomplished and more intellectual ones than Anna McTavish; yet these young men seemed perfectly blind to this fact, and one seemed to follow the other like a flock of sheep, until Anna during her stay, had a complete monopoly of the beaux.

Dr. De Wilton was frequently from home; sometimes he went for pleasure, sometimes on business, and frequently he went by invitation, to lecture upon scientific or moral subjects. He usually took Mrs. De Wilton or Richard, or both with him, and he was now planning quite an extensive business trip down into the southern states. These trips were very distasteful to Richard unless his mother was along; his father's long scientific, moral, or religious talks with his friends were extremely dull to him, and his mother had frequently consented to go simply to break the monotony for her son. As she could not accompany them this time Richard was very averse to going, but the doctor was determined that he should. Richard had been about the only disappointment in life the doctor had ever had, and he was also a great disappointment to his gentle, loving mother. But what Christian mother loves a son less because he is wayward and reckless? Isn't her solicitude, her anxiety, her devotion, her love, all strengthened and rendered more alert, just in proportion to the manner in which he is condemned and spurned? 'And so it was with this gentle, tender, loving woman; with all her pure, noble nature, she hated his sins, but she loved the sinner.

When Richard came in to breakfast that morn-

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ing, dressed in a pretty dark blue suit, neither father nor mother could repress an exclamation of admiration; in fact, he was an exceedingly handsome boy. The doctor seemed deeply impressed by his boy's appearance, and as Richard passed on to his private room, he remarked to Mrs. De Wilton:

"What a pity; I believe he is the handsomest boy I have ever seen, and if he would only take the right bend in life, what couldn't he accomplish?" The mother flushed at this, for compliments were few from Dr. De Wilton to his son; then she sighed and said:

"I trust Richard where I try to trust everything else, and I hope in God's mercies to him. He can change him when he sees fit." Richard's return put a stop to further conversation.

But what business had Richard in his father's private room? Why did he glance around so furtively while standing by the old secretary or desk, to see if his father's or mother's eyes had followed him? He had no intention of filching money from his father's private drawer, he was not robbing him of any of his valuables, he was in no sense a thief, but seeing he was unobserved, he quickly opened a drawer and drew from it a little innocent looking toy and slipped it into the pocket of his trousers. In size and appearance it was a toy, but not one that a boy should use. It was probably two inches long, with handsome pearl and silver mounting, and was really a very pretty little piece of mechanism. What a weapon for poor, careless, reckless Richard De Wilton to be armed

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with; what a weapon for a civilized, Christianized man to invent for the use of another man who has been accustomed to listen to the mild and gentle teachings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ from earliest childhood.

Armed with this little weapon, the assassin could look you calmly in the face and shoot you from his coat pocket; the violent man in a moment of fury, could shoot down his best friend before he knew that he had such an intention. A weapon suited to a Christian land,—where the gospel doctrine of non-resistance to evil is ignored; and the customs and traditions still teach: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, and that vengeance belongs to man rather than to God. Dr. De Wilton, the lesson you gave your son nearly four years ago, and the subsequent talks you have had with him upon this subject, have armed him with this fearful little weapon to-day. Had you have allowed the gentle teachings of his mother to take root in his mind, he would not even have thought of a weapon, but would have committed himself simply to the protection of Almighty God. The current of his life might have been changed, and he and yourself been spared much suffering and anguish. Fathers and mothers, when you advise little children to stand up for their rights, to strike back when stricken; to strike when given the lie, etc., etc., have you carefully read the teachings of your Lord and Master and of his Apostles? And later, when you send your child to high school or college, and have him taught the science of defense and offense, do you not think it has a tendency to make

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him self-reliant and aggressive, a little disposed frequently to show off and become a bully? Don't you think there is something contrary to the teachings of the meek and lowly Jesus in all this, and doesn't this physical culture, in some cases at least, exalt the brute which lies dormant in too many of us, and only needs a little encouragement to manifest itself?

After breakfasting, Dr. De Wilton and Richard drove to the station, and were soon speeding their way to Washington, where they took one of the great through lines to their destination.

Five days elapsed and Mrs. De Wilton received a letter from the doctor; he wrote they were having a very nice time, indeed, succeeded in arranging his business very satisfactorily; he thought Richard was enjoying himself, and they were about leaving for a city farther south.

Twelve days later, as she was returning from a long ride on horseback, a telegram was handed to her which read as follows:

"Myself, Richard and two others will be at the station on the 6:15 train, Sunday evening. All sick. Meet us and bring two covered spring wagons, beds in each, and one carriage.

"M. DE W."

Mrs. De Wilton was very much troubled over this unexpected telegram. She slept very little Saturday night. Sunday morning, the train arrived, and when it came puffing in, the wagons and carriage were drawn up, waiting with the anxious woman and a woman friend. As the

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train stopped, Dr. De Wilton came on the platform of the car; so changed, that had his wife not been expecting him, she would not have recognized him. Mrs. De Wilton quickly ascended the steps, and the doctor, throwing his arms around her, burst into tears. She soothed him and asked what was the matter? "Everything," he replied. "Poor Richard"—and again the doctor broke down and sobbed like a child. The wife was dreadfully alarmed.

"What has happened to him?" she asked. "Is he dead?"

"No; worse," he answered sadly.

"Where is he?"

"In the car."

"Then, take me to him," she cried, and seizing the doctor's hand, she led him back into the car. Poor Richard lay on a cot, whiter than the sheet he was on. There was a look of sadness, utter helplessness upon his deathly pale face, that was heart rending for a mother to behold. At his head stood a sallow, sickly looking little girl, with large dark eyes, and a profusion of black ringlets; like the rest of the party, her face had a sad, wistful expression, and child though she was, she seemed ill at ease and troubled; her hand rested on Richard's brow, as though she were trying to comfort him.

The mother sprang forward and caught her son's pale face between her hands and covered it with kisses.

"What is it, my dear child?" said she. "What is it that troubles you so? Have you been ill?"

Like the father, the boy burst into tears. "Oh!

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mother!" he sobbed, "you will know it soon enough. It will break your heart, and you will never forgive me. Oh, I wish I was dead!"

"Richard," said the mother, "you must not talk in this way. Have you ever been guilty of anything that I haven't forgiven you? Calm yourself, my dear boy; you must trust me as you have always done, and I promise you, if everyone else looks coldly upon you, I will not. We will not talk any more of this now. I have a nice covered wagon here with a bed in it, and you shall ride home with your head in my lap, and I know you will feel better before you get there." Then she noticed the little girl; she placed her arm around her, drew her tenderly to her and kissed her, and turning to Richard, asked him who his little friend was.

"She is a daughter of that lady over there," said Richard.

Mrs. De Wilton glanced in the direction indicated, and there on a bed just beyond Richard, lay a dark woman; evidently in the last stage of some fatal malady. The wasted features, the emaciated form, the burning, unnatural brightness of the eye, all indicated, only too plainly, that disease and anguish had almost accomplished their work, and that this unfortunate lady's earthly course was nearly finished. Mrs. De Wilton looked up, she encountered the gaze of the dying woman fixed upon her, as though she would read the very innermost recesses of her heart, so intense, so earnest was her gaze, that for a moment it startled her.

With her arm around the child, she was ap-

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proaching the woman, when Dr. De Wilton informed her that she was a foreigner, and spoke neither English, French or any other language he had ever heard. So Mrs. De Wilton with her arm still around the child went to the mother, took her kindly by the hand, and looked the sympathy into her eyes she could not express in words.

A bright smile overspread her wasted features, she pressed Mrs. De Wilton's hand and taking that of her daughter, placed it within that of her new-found friend. As she did so, a look of intense meaning rested on her features. Mrs. De Wilton understood it and knew that the poor mother was giving her charge of her daughter, with a full knowledge that she would soon pass from under her own care. She was deeply touched.

"Tell your mother," said she, to the little girl, "that I will try to fill her place to you, and that for the future you shall be as much my daughter as Richard is my son." The child replied fluently, but in the French language; fortunately Mrs. De Wilton understood the French. She told her that she knew very little of her mother's language, having been brought up in France, and though she could not even talk to her, yet she knew she had a dear, sweet mother.

"She is a lady," said the little child, "and I do love her very much." They were interrupted by the conductor who came to inform them they would have to vacate the cars, as it was time to move the train. Dr. Moncure was so demoralized and helpless, that his wife had to attend to everything, and it was not long before she had the unfortunate lady and her child placed in one

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wagon, and Richard in another; leaving the carriage for the doctor.

At length after a long and tiresome ride, they reached "The Hall." Richard was removed to his mother's room, and the mother and daughter to one adjoining. Richard soon became very nervous and restless and seemed to be in a high fever. He confided to his mother that his arm was very painful and wanted dressing. His mother undid the bandages very carefully and tenderly, and imagine her alarm, when she saw a dreadful wound, extending around his left arm. It was a frightful cut, and it seemed as though the bone alone had prevented its being severed in twain. She was dreadfully shocked and could scarcely keep from fainting, but, notwithstanding her gentle nature and sensitive organization, she had a very strong nerve. She expressed no surprise at her son's situation, but washed his wound and dressed it in the most careful manner, and soon after, he went to sleep. The next few days were anxious, busy days to Mrs. De Wilton. The doctor's indisposition proved short lived; as soon as he found himself upon his native heath, he showed signs of amendment; but to do him justice, weeks and even months elapsed before he was quite himself again.

Time wore on. Mrs. De Wilton was in deep trouble, Richard did not seem to improve, and still wore a look of trouble and despondency, and the little girl flitted from his couch to her mother's, and looked sad and distressed, while the dark lady seemed to be failing hourly. Her daughter was the only one who could understand the

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signs she made. About six o'clock in the evening, the little girl came to Mrs. Moncure and told her in her pretty French, that her mother wanted to see a priest. "And you won't like that, madam, will you?" said the child, "but mother is so sick and so low and she can't die satisfied without having the Father with her." This was a new revelation to Mrs. Moncure. Why should her husband have brought this dark stranger and her little daughter home with him, from a far, distant city, and she a Catholic; and he so devout a Protestant and so opposed to Catholicism? Why had her poor boy that gaping, dreadful wound in his arm, and why all this mystery and depression? These thoughts flitted rapidly through Mrs. Moncure's brain. She took the little girl in her arms, and said: "Why do you think I would object to having a priest for your mother?"

"Because, madam," the child replied, "monsieur the doctor is a Protestant, and doesn't like the Catholics at all."

"And how do you know this?"

"I heard him tell Richard never to mention the name of Catholic to him again?"

"When was this?"

"While we were aboard the boat on the Mississippi," said the child, "and Richard told him he ought not to blame the Catholics for what he had done himself, and the doctor got very angry, and some hot words passed between them."

"Oh, well, child," said Mrs. Moncure, "the doctor has forgotten these long ago; your poor mother shall have a priest at once. I will go in and see the doctor about it now."

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Mrs. Moncure was more mystified than ever, but still she was not prepared for the harsh and severe manner in which her husband met her request.

"No," said he, "a designing Catholic priest shall not enter these doors. I have had enough of them to last me my lifetime."

"But, Moncure," said his wife, "you certainly wouldn't allow this lady—after bringing her to your house—to die without receiving what consolation her religion can give? What would you think of a Catholic who would keep a preacher of your own denomination from you, were you dying?"

But the doctor was bitter and determined in his opposition, and finally very sulkily agreed to allow Dr. Hargrave to settle this dispute. Dr. Hargrave was sent for at once: and most earnestly took Mrs. Moncure's side of the question.

"I will go myself," said the good doctor, "and send the telegraphic message," and so he did. In about three hours the priest arrived from the county town, and none too soon. The poor lady was rapidly sinking, and at about twelve at night, her spirit left its earthly abode.

Mrs. Moncure wanted to have the unfortunate lady buried in the family lot in the new cemetery; but the doctor would not listen to this, and finally told his wife—to get rid of further entreaty upon the subject—that the constitution forbade the burial there of any but persons of the white race.

"Well," said his wife, "you know that this was done to exclude negroes and nobody else; if you

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choose to bury this lady there upon our lot, there will be nothing thought or said of it; if you bury her very obscurely, it may give rise to very unpleasant talk and comment; you don't think she is of negro origin, do you?"

"I know she is not," said Dr. Moncure; "can't you see she belongs to an Asiatic race; most probably an East Indian?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Moncure. "I believe this, too; and I also believe she is a lady of birth and distinction; what objection then can you make to having her placed in our lot? Her little daughter is here, a member of our family, and on that account it would be better for us to show to the world the estimation in which we held the mother?"

But the doctor was deaf to his wife's wishes and arguments, and it was only with great difficulty that she gained his consent to having the unfortunate lady buried in the old cemetery.

CHAPTER XI.

LITTLE Louise was very sad after her mother's death, and mourned for her deeply. One night a week later, Mrs. De Wilton entered her boy's room and stirred the fire. Coming to the bed, she sat down beside it. He was still awake, and she put her hand upon his head, and asked him how he felt.

"I have not been asleep yet," he replied.

"Then why is it, my dear child, that you are restless and sleep so little; isn't something troubling you, and won't you tell mother what it is?"

"I have wanted to tell you," said Richard, "but I have not been able to bring myself to do it. I knew it would hurt and trouble you so. Have you had a talk with father?"

"Yes," she replied.

"And has he told you?"

"Yes, everything," she answered.

"Well, mother," said he, and his lips trembled painfully, and his eyes filled with tears, "do you, too, think I am a murderer?"

"No, indeed, my dear child, far from it," was the mother's reply, and then she took her son's hand in her own: "who has dared to say such a thing of you?"

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"Father said so."

"Well," said the mother hotly, "it was unjust, ungenerous and ungrateful in your father to say such a thing. What you did was for him, and saved his life by it, and he said an untruth, for you did a brave, gallant act. One that few men would have had courage to do, and nobody on earth would call it murder but your father. I am sorry it happened, Richard; sorry you had the means with you to do such a thing; but it is done, my dear child, and I am glad to know that you have a brave, noble spirit, and are no coward. I am sorry you could not have shown this in a different way; you have a nice little sister now to be with; who will be constant society for you; she loves you very much, and I hope and believe you will care too much for her and for me, to be wild and reckless as you have heretofore." The boy pressed his mother's hand to his lips and burst into tears.

"I have the sweetest, dearest mother in this world," he said, "and I have been a base and ungrateful brute, but for your sake, I will, indeed, try to do better in the future. Father teaches me one way, and you another, and when I do as he advises me and get into trouble, he says dreadful things to me and makes it so much harder for me to bear. While you who have every reason to be angry and feel bitterly toward me, like one of God's angels which you are, have nothing but compassion, and love and pity for me."

"You must not think harshly of your father; he probably was shocked and troubled when he made those remarks to you; he has long since for-

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gotten them and is very uneasy and anxious for your recovery. Now it is late and you must compose yourself and try to sleep."

"I will try," said Richard. "Won't you lie on the bed with me?" And lying down by her son, she put her arms around him and soon both were fast asleep. The Bible says: "Sorrow endureth for a night," and truly this is so with the young.

The conversation with his mother had lifted a weight from Richard De Wilton's mind, and soon the buoyancy and elasticity of youth began to assert itself, and despite his troubles and his wounds, and consequent loss of blood, he began to regain his health. The constant care, watchfulness, and anxiety to please him and to anticipate his every wish, evinced by the little foreign maiden, were more grateful to him still, for sad to confess, this child of whom Richard knew nothing, and could only converse with by signs, the acquaintance of a day, was proving a successful rival to his sweet, noble mother, who had watched over him and loved him from his birth.

Richard De Wilton at the age of twelve was heels over head in love with a little maiden of only eight, and without having read a novel of Owen Meredith's, or even knowing that such a poet existed. When he listened to her pretty French prattle, he felt "that his heart's native tongue to his heart had been uttered," and felt himself not quietly falling in love; but, falling in love with an impetuosity known only to such natures as Richard De Wilton's—and his mother, wiser upon those subjects than her son, was quick to see this passion, and was pleased at it, and

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with her woman's tact encouraged it. Is anything more self-sacrificing than the love of a pure, good, Christian woman for her offspring?

For two weeks after the death of Mrs. Delmar, Richard was confined to the house, on account of his weakness, and such was the devotion of his little adopted sister, that she would not leave him even to ride out with Mrs. Moncure, and this pleased the fond mother immensely. They had not been long together before the little girl began to acquire some knowledge of English and Richard's talk to her was frequently interlarded with French words and sentences. She, young as she was, evidently had literary tastes; and it soon became evident that if master Richard wanted to be her companion and friend, he would have to cultivate literary tastes, too, for even at her tender age, she was fond of books, and knew a great deal more than Richard. When they began to go out together, the people took a great deal of notice of them; Richard's pale face and subdued manner told them a tale of sickness and suffering, and excited their sympathy and curiosity, too; and the little girl with her foreign tongue and very pleasant face attracted a good deal of attention, so that really, she and Richard for a time, were the notables of Windemere.

Dr. De Wilton did not fancy the intimacy that had sprung up between Richard and Louise; but it was entirely of his own procuring, and he could say nothing, so he sulkily permitted matters to take their course. The children went to Dr. Hargrave's school. Louise had considerable artistic taste, and much of their idle time was spent in

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sketching and painting. Richard thought during the early portion of his childhood that the neighboring children had treated him rather badly, and though not vindictive, he was high spirited and sensitive,—hence he had never mingled with them very freely, and with the exception of Richard Arnold, his playmate and servant, and some Indian children, he had held himself rather aloof from his kind. But with Louise it was all different. They were interested in each other and always had something to talk of privately and mysteriously, and the delighted mother used to look on and wonder what they could find from day to day and from hour to hour to feel such absorbing and constant interest in. They were very active children, and on Saturdays and holidays would roam over the hills and valleys of Windemere, sometimes going for miles. Richard taught her to ride horseback, until she was about as perfect in this exercise as he was himself. He taught her archery, and would have taught her the use of firearms if his mother would have allowed it. In winter they spent hours skating on the lake, and he would frequently keep her out until the sun had disappeared, coasting.

They were, under different circumstances, and with different surroundings, a second "Paul and Virginia," a little more sophisticated but nearly as innocent in their intercourse as those two unfortunate lovers are represented to have been; she seemed to fall into all his boyish tastes, and she bound him and led him, as by a "three ply cord," which the scripture tells us "is not easily broken." Richard had given up all his evil ways, abandoned

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all his old associates, treated his father with the greatest respect, had become exceedingly studious, and was learning very rapidly. He and Louise were constant and regular in their attendance at church and Sunday school and both devoted to their mother. Richard was a noble looking, handsome boy, and little Louise had lost all her paleness and sallowness; she had grown considerably and bade fair to be a very beautiful and interesting girl. The two children were very popular and seemed to be much liked about Windemere, especially Louise, who had a way of ingratiating herself with people, peculiarly her own.

She had been in her new house now nearly a year, and no happier children than these two, ever existed, and no happier or prouder mother could be found in all this broad land; every care seemed to have been driven from Mrs. De Wilton's face; every burden seemed to have been lifted from her shoulders; every trouble seemed to have been buried; her lovely eyes shone with the luster of former days; her smile so sweet, and for some years so infrequent, had returned to her beautiful lips, and Mrs. De Wilton was more lovely than ever before. The mother was glorified in her children: they rode with her, they drove with her, and at "The Hall," they were her frequent companions, her every thought was of them. The smallness and selfishness of her husband no longer annoyed her. All she had suffered and the bitter disappointment she had endured, were nothing to her now, so great was the happiness and pleasure she experienced with her children.

CHAPTER XII.

ONE bright, pretty, fall morning when Louise and Richard entered the Windemere Sunday schoolroom, she spoke pleasantly to a little girl, Daisy McNevitt, and took a seat by her; she thought Daisy returned her salutation rather stiffly; and as she turned to her to say something about the lesson, Daisy rose promptly and changed her seat.

The time when Dr. De Wilton became possessed of Louise Delmar, and her unfortunate mother, was just prior to the war between the States. The institution of slavery, which now exists only in the recollection of the oldest of us, and remembered more as a dream than a reality, was then in active operation. A man considered his slaves, as he did his horse, or his cow, and he disposed of them publicly or privately as best suited his interests or inclinations. The feeling between the sections was strained, excited and bitter, and the voice of conservatism, the voice of God in our land, was being rapidly silenced. Men of the same race who had stood shoulder to shoulder in the darkest and dreariest periods of our nation's history, united by many social and political ties, professing the same religion, belonging to the same denominations, following in the foot-

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steps of the same meek and lowly Master, were almost on the eve of imbruing their hands in each others' blood. Dr. De Wilton and Richard had reached the end of their journey, a large southern city. After spending a few days there, they intended to return to their Virginia home. One morning as Dr. De Wilton and Richard were about leaving their hotel, the doctor's attention was attracted by a man in the garb of a Catholic priest. He was tall and slender, his habiliments a little frayed and worn, but scrupulously neat and tidy. His face was very pale, and his eyes had an eager, restless expression; altogether, he was very refined and intellectual looking. He looked earnestly at the doctor for some moments, and then approached him:

"I don't think that I can be mistaken," he said. "I feel sure you must be my old friend Moncure De Wilton: a little changed by the hand of Time, but it has rested so lightly and softly upon you that it has added to your personnel, instead of detracting from it." Dr. De Wilton bowed pleasantly.

"Yes," said he, "I am Dr. De Wilton, but though there is something familiar in your person and manner you must excuse me for not being able to place you. I am really entirely at fault."

"I can readily excuse you," the priest replied; "no friend who knew me in my youth would recognize me now, I am so changed; but I know you will remember me when I tell you I am Antoine Le Favre, with whom you roomed in Philadelphia." Dr. De Wilton stepped forward and eagerly took the priest's hand.

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"My dear fellow," said he, "I am truly glad to meet you. I was thinking of you a few days ago, and wondering what had become of you: but why are you in this habit, instead of practicing your profession?" The priest became sad in a moment.

"It is a long tale," said he; "too long for me to tell now, but I have been very unfortunate. I have lost my parents, my sister, and my property. I have met with a far more serious loss than these, and have become entirely wearied and disgusted with the world. I realize as few do or can, the utter vanity and folly of everything of a temporal nature, and am trying to make my peace with my God. As I am of French extraction and my people generally Catholic, it is as natural for me to become a Catholic priest, as it would be for you under similar circumstances, and feeling as I do, to become an Episcopal minister; but I practice my profession yet, and believe I can do more good in my double capacity of priest and physician, than if I were priest alone. Only I no longer make it a matter of dollars and cents, but give to the unfortunate suffering, all I have to bestow, and minister to their souls and bodies, as God in his mercy and their goodness gives me power."

Dr. De Wilton hastened to apologize for having mentioned so unpleasant a subject to his friend, but Le Favre told him he had done no harm.

"When I get the opportunity," said he, "I will be only too glad to tell you my whole story, and I know I will have your sympathy, but if you have not kept track of me, I have of you. I have taken great interest in reading your writings, both

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on medical and religious subjects, and I read the many notices in the public prints of the country praising you for your love of your kind, and the generous, noble manner in which you have been able to show it. I have no doubt, Moncure, that you are one of the few wealthy men of this world who make a proper use of their money, and employ it as a means of laying up treasure in heaven. Unfortunately for me, I did not realize this until my property was swept from me, but if I had the means now, I believe I would be as liberal as you have been,—as it is, I only regret my loss of opportunity.”

Dr. Moncure was much flattered by this honest praise. The doctor replied modestly, that he had only performed his duty to his fellow creatures.

“My father very unexpectedly,” said he, “left me a large inheritance, and I have always considered it my Christian duty to help the deserving poor and unfortunate.”

“And do you confine your humanitarianism to your own estate, to your own county, to your own church?”

“You have read my public utterances to little purpose, Antoine, if you ask me such a question as this. I believe a man in helping his fellow creatures should help them where he finds distress and misfortune, irrespective of church or any other environments, provided the object is a worthy one.”

“I thought these were the motives upon which you have acted, my dear friend,” said Antoine, “and I believe Almighty God has sent you within

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a few squares of this hotel, one of the saddest, most heart-rending cases of unmerited misfortune and distress, your eyes have ever rested upon. It is that of a lady in very feeble health who has been sent, I believe, by her husband or friends, from France, for political reasons, to her kinsfolk in this city. The unfortunate woman was robbed in some way of her money and valuables, on the way; her servant, mortally wounded, died the next day after she reached here. He tried hard to tell me who she and her child were, but was so far gone, his words were almost unintelligible. The lady herself does not speak either French or English; or any other language, with which I am familiar. The daughter, only eight years old, speaks only French. She has been raised and educated in a convent or school, and seems to know nothing of her family, and has only known her mother since they started on this disastrous voyage, and doesn't speak her mother's language at all. I think the lady, from her appearance, is an East Indian by birth and education, and worse than all the rest," said he, "the people to whom she has come, her own flesh and blood, as I firmly believe, have seized her and her child, thrown them into a slave prison upon the pretext that she is an escaped slave, and she and her child will be auctioned off day after to-morrow, at public auction, as African slaves."

"This is indeed horrible," said Dr. Moncure; "why not appeal to the law?"

"Alas," said the priest, "a poor, unhappy woman without friends, without money, and without even the power of language to tell her own story, would

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have little chance before the law, and especially in the present state of excited public feelings on the subject of slavery."

"But why do you think she is a lady instead of what these people claim her to be?" asked Dr. De Wilton.

"Well," said Le Favre, "I was sent for in my religious character, first, to see the servant, who was very low. He was a Frenchman, and his talk was incoherent and wild; he seemed to have something on his mind that he wanted to tell, but could not. He frequently called upon his grace the Duke, frequently mentioned his mistress the Duchess and her daughter *mam'selle* Louise, who would be a great lady some day. I knew nothing of this lady and her daughter then, and it was difficult to make this poor man change this subject long enough to get him sufficiently composed, to do for him what our church believes necessary for the dying. When this had been performed, however, he raised his hand feebly and kept fumbling his pillows and seemed worried and excited. I then passed my hand under his pillow and found a very pretty locket or medallion. It was elegantly finished and of unusually large size and contained three pictures. One of a man of very haughty military appearance, elegantly dressed in uniform, and opposite to him, this dark lady also splendidly dressed with a coronet on her head. As his dying eyes rested on these pictures, he said:

"'Duke,' 'Duchess,' and as I again opened to the little girl, 'Mam'selle:' he was too nearly

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gone to say more, and in a few minutes breathed his last.

"From his bedside I was called to that of his mistress, Mrs. Delmar, and when I learned the state of affairs, I was truly sorry that I did not try to get the man to say more, and tell me what was upon his mind. This lady and her daughter were both dressed very neatly, though their clothing showed some of the effects of the severe usage to which they had been subjected. This apparel has all been removed now, and they are plainly clad as slaves usually are; but with your scientific knowledge, you will know as soon as you see this lady and her daughter, that there is no taint of African blood in either of them, and I firmly believe that this is an illustrious titled woman, and that she and her child are the victims of a most foul conspiracy: even in this free land of ours."

"Granting this," said Dr. De Wilton, "what can philanthropy do in such a case?"

"The worst remains to be told," said the priest; "every institution has its defects and abuses, and this of slavery is not exempt from them. This case has been much talked of, and has even gotten into the papers. It has caused a great deal of talk and comment, and excitement, and there is a low, filthy ruffian here, who buys handsome mulatto girls, I fear for immoral purposes. He says he will buy this girl at any cost, and will wade through blood before any one else shall have her; that he cares nothing for the mother, but the girl he will have or know the reason why. I had persuaded an old gentleman here, a Catholic, to

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buy the mother and daughter, but after he had seen this violent and truculent ruffian, he was afraid to bid against him; but I don't believe, my friend, that you are afraid of any man, and if you wish to merit heaven's blessing, by doing the best act of your life, buy this woman and her daughter, and I and other friends I have here will stand by you, and see you through with this business."

"You talk, my friend, as if we were not living in free, law-abiding America, but in some savage land," replied the doctor. "If I want to bid upon this lady, haven't I the same right to do so as any other American citizen? I would not regard this man a moment, but buy her and her child if I liked to, and stand up for my rights too, if necessary."

"This is nobly spoken," said Le Favre, "and what I would have expected of my old friend and roommate, Moncure De Wilton."

Richard had also been an eager listener to his story, and was much excited over it. The next day, Richard and the doctor, accompanied by the priest, visited the unfortunate woman. The practiced eyes of the doctor told him that she was beyond the reach of human aid, while her situation and her great anxiety on account of her child would have touched a heart of stone: Richard was greatly moved; the helplessness of the mother, her inability to utter an intelligible word, even to her child, and her great wish to tell them something, which she evidently deemed of great importance, was pitiable and touched the heart of even the cool, dispassionate doctor him-

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self. He told the priest and Richard that he had determined to purchase this lady and her daughter if this ruffian did not bid entirely out of reason for them.

"In that case," said he, "as my means for this purpose are limited, I will be compelled to let matters take their course."

"The auctioneer is a member of my church," said Le Favre, "and under strong obligations to me, and if he can do anything in our favor without being accused of partiality, he will do it."

About ten o'clock the next day, the dignified person and handsome, scholarly face of Dr. Moncure De Wilton, attended by Richard, whose bright face and eager manner showed that, like the war horse, "he smelled the battle from afar," might have been seen swelling the motley crowd contained within the limit of the slave market.

The priest Le Favre was also there, and accompanied by a gentleman whose square shoulders, firm jaw and prominent protruding chin proved at a glance that Le Favre had only done him justice, in saying he was courageous and reliable. Soon after Dr. De Wilton and Richard entered, the auctioneer announced the sale would begin by disposing of two female slaves; mother and daughter. Owing to the fact that the mother was in very poor health, only the daughter would be exposed to public view; but any one contemplating purchasing would be shown to the mother's room, so that he would see her condition for himself, as it was the wish of the owners for everything to be done fairly and above board. Only one man availed himself of this permission;

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a tall, powerful man, slightly stooped in the shoulders, having a round bullet head, and reddish, black eyes, with a very evil expression in them, and exhaling the odor of whiskey wherever he went; his inspection was very short. He returned to the crowd and addressing the auctioneer, said:

"I would not give you a cent for the woman; I am not buying a dead nigger, and she is as good as dead now; but put up the little gal and we will soon see who has the biggest pile in this crowd." Little Louise Delmar, pale and trembling, was led forward and placed in view of the crowd for sale. She and her mother were sold together, and the first bid offered by the trader was an enormous one. Dr. De Wilton promptly offered one hundred dollars more. The trader gave him a very severe look, in which surprise at his temerity and anger were blended. He then added another hundred to his bid, and the bidding between him and the doctor became very active, and had reached an enormous figure, when some one interrupted the trader, and holding up his finger to the auctioneer as a signal to await his return, he left the room. The auctioneer innocently or wilfully misunderstood the signal, and his hammer came down at Dr. De Wilton's next bid. When the trader returned Dr. De Wilton was in the act of handing his check to the auctioneer. Utter astonishment for a moment seemed to deprive him of the power of speech; then his anger seemed to know no bounds. "Old-cock," cried he, walking up to Dr. De Wilton, "this is a misdeal, a d——d piece of rascality.

Take back your check and have this sale over, or I will have your heart's blood." There is something dreadful in the aspect of a thoroughly angry man, with murder in every lineament, in every action, and only one thoroughly inured to scenes of bloodshed and strife can face such a man with any degree of calmness. As this infuriated brute rushed upon Dr. De Wilton, he turned deathly pale, but he was constitutionally a brave man, and with what calmness he could command, replied that he had bought the woman and child fairly and intended to hold to his bargain.

Like the lightning's flash the trader's hand sought his coat collar, and his terrible bowie knife flashed in the air, aimed at Dr. De Wilton's heart. But quicker than almost anything you can imagine, Richard De Wilton sprang between them, received the blow intended for his father on his left arm, and shot the trader through the heart with his little pistol. He fell without a groan and seemed dead before he touched the floor. Dr. De Wilton's life was saved, but at what a cost. Poor Richard De Wilton, not yet twelve years old, a homicide.

Little Louise Delmar, the innocent cause of this tragedy, uttered a shriek and fainted, and Dr. De Wilton, realizing what had occurred, glancing from the dead body of the trader to his son, who, with a face very pale, and the blood spouting from his arm, stood before him, followed the example of the little girl, and fell to the floor in a dead faint. Only one man in all this crowd seemed to be possessed of his faculties, and this was the man who came with the priest. The

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tragedy had taken place so quickly, that it seemed rather a troubled dream than a reality. The crowd seemed dazed, spellbound by it, but this gentleman said something in a low voice to Father Le Favre. The father seemed to recover his self-possession in a moment, and pointing to Richard, hurried from the room. The stranger took Richard in his arms, at once quickly removed his sleeve, improvised a tourniquet, and then taking from his pocket a case of instruments, with the assistance of a bystander, succeeded in taking up the severed blood vessels, and hastily dressing the ugly wound. By this time, the priest had returned, and calling upon some friends, the doctor, Richard, the little girl, and her mother were carried rapidly to the wharf, and placed on board a steamer just leaving. When Dr. De Wilton recovered from his fainting spell, they were several miles from the scene of the tragedy, and had escaped the meshes of the law. Through the prudence and promptness of this stranger, they escaped the unavoidable publicity and newspaper notoriety which always attaches to judicial criminal proceedings in this country. Fortunately for them, the business of hunting the mote in their neighbor's eyes, was not a developed science with the American people as it is now, and although the large towns along the rivers at this early day were connected by telegraph, the fugitives were permitted to go in peace, and reached their home in Virginia without molestation. Consequently the people of Windemere were in ignorance as to the antecedents of little Louise Delmar, and the child would probably have been left to enjoy her hap-

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piness had it not been for the unfortunate curiosity of a busy-body, who had stolen into the room where her dead mother lay, and spread a report through the village that she was a colored woman. The wildest and most impossible stories were in circulation in regard to this child and her mother, and were generally credited by good people of the estate and adjoining country. From being very popular, and much sought after by the people, little Louise had become an object of aversion to a large majority. Some gazed at her as they would at a strange, wild animal, others with looks of animosity, and others again with contempt and indifference.

CHAPTER XIII.

ONE Saturday evening about a month after Richard's and Louise's ostracism had commenced, Richard had been sent on an errand by his father, and Mrs. De Wilton being a little indisposed, Louise had remained with her; she had stepped into her mother's dressing room, when Dr. De Wilton entered. After talking a few moments, he told his wife that he had a little plan for Louise, which he thought far better than keeping her there and sending her to a promiscuous school of boys and girls. He said he had decided that she should go to a school for girls in the Valley of Virginia. Mrs. De Wilton said she could not see the necessity for doing this. "She can be with no better or more careful teacher than Dr. Hargrave, and no two children could be learning more rapidly than she and Richard, and she is of very tender age yet, and I promised her mother to be a mother to her. If she were my own child, I could not think of sending her to a boarding-school at her present age."

"Then, madam, we must stop all association between her and Richard, or send Richard away; one or the other course we will be compelled to pursue," said Dr. De Wilton.

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"Why will either of these courses be necessary?"

"Don't you see the manner in which they are shunned by every boy and girl, and grown up people, too, in Windemere?"

"Yes," said Mrs. De Wilton, "I see how cruelly the people of 'Windemere' are treating my two poor children, and perhaps you can tell me the cause."

"A story is being told about here," said Dr. Moncure, "that Louise has negro blood in her veins. Most exaggerated accounts of how I obtained her are in circulation, and if something isn't done, it will ruin Louise and Richard, too. I know you can no more bear the idea of Richard being in constant association with a mulatto child than I can, or even of these people thinking so."

"Well, Moncure," said his wife, "you and I both know that there is no African blood in Louise. You took her to befriend her. I promised her mother on her death bed, to be a mother to her motherless little child, and I know that heaven's blessing would not rest upon any of us if we failed in this obligation. Look what an influence she always exercises over Richard; look what a student he is, and what an exemplary noble boy he has become; and all this I humbly believe has been brought about by having this dear, sweet little sister sent to him; I believe God has sent us this child to reform and Christianize our son."

"Yes," said Moncure grimly, "and to marry him a little later on. I really don't see, madam, how you can tolerate the thought. To me it is simply horrible."

"Don't you believe that child's mother is of

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noble parentage?" said his wife. "Do you think she has any African blood in her veins?"

"She has some dark blood which is not African, maybe worse. I believe I was victimized by that artful priest, and I never think of how I acquired this wretched child without a shudder of horror convulsing my whole frame."

"You should not give way to such feelings. I don't believe the priest victimized you. I believe him a man of God, and that he told you the simple truth about this unfortunate lady and her poor little girl. You do wrong to let this child see your aversion to her. She is very proud. It is her chief foible, and I can see it gives her great unhappiness. I believe it is our duty to stand by her in the present crisis, and believe God will bless us in doing so."

"Yes, I shall stand by her, too, but in a very different way."

"Well," said Mrs. Moncure, "I have tried to obey you in everything, and I wish to continue to do so, but nothing on this earth will make me consent to give up this little child, or be separated from her. I love her just as I do Richard. I know no difference, and I will fulfil my promise to her mother as long as God gives me power to do so."

"Then what would you advise in this matter," said the doctor, "for something must be done."

"Simply to do our duty by our children, and leave the result with God. In His own good time He will bring it to pass, and our ways and their ways will be all smoothed for us."

"Well," said the doctor, "I was afraid you

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would take this view of it, and I have traced this matter to Mrs. McNevitt, and I will make her and her husband regret the day when they have dared to interfere with me."

"And if I were in your place," said Mrs. De Wilton, "I would let them alone, and trust it all to God."

Dr. Moncure left the room, and for the first time, Mrs. Moncure thought of Louise. She arose and opened her dressing-room door and found the child sitting on a lounge weeping.

"Oh, madam," said she, "I don't know what to do. I didn't want to listen, and I felt so badly after the doctor began to talk, that I could not come out. Why didn't you let him send me away? He is ashamed of me, ashamed for Richard to go with me. Oh, madam, why don't you let him have his way?"

"Louise," said the gentle mother, "are you going to find fault with me, too? Don't you know why I did not let him send you away, and would you, just to gratify a foolish pride, be willing to leave me and Richard, too?"

"Oh, madam!" said the little child, "I can never go out with Richard again after what the doctor said of me."

"And why can't you go out with me," said Richard, who had returned and was overhearing every word—"what is it, mother, and why is Louise crying?"

So his mother told him all that had occurred. Richard was dreadfully angry and hurt. He would willingly have championed his little sister's cause against Windemere or the world, but his mother,

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like the wise, sweet woman she was, soothed and comforted both her children, and after a long talk, Richard took his sister by the hand and told her she should go out with him.

"More than you have ever done," said he, "and the boy or man who attempts to put any slight upon you, had better look out for himself."

The little girl had smiled through her tears, and thanked him,—more by looks than words for his devotion to her.

Dr. Moncure proceeded at once to sue the McNevitts for slander, but like all cowards, they denied ever having spread any reports concerning little Louise. The doctor was not to be so easily satisfied, however, and compelled them to make a public denial, much to their chagrin.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was a dark, gloomy Saturday in the autumn. The doctor had gone in his carriage on important business, and Mrs. De Wilton was in her room reading, the two children were in the sitting room singing. Mrs. De Wilton would stop from time to time to listen to them. Before long a servant entered and told her that the Queen of the Gypsies wanted to see her. Mrs. De Wilton thought of sending her word that she was not at home, but finally told the servant to show her in. She was a tall, dark woman of middle age, with keen black eyes, and a decidedly sad face. Mrs. De Wilton spoke kindly to her, and offered her a seat, which she took, then said:

"Lady, I have come to ask a favor of you. I usually ask these things of the gentlemen, but I know what you say will be acquiesced in by your husband. My tribe is across the river, about ten miles from here, but the limestone water does not agree with some of us, and none of us like it, and I have come to ask you if you won't allow us to encamp upon your estate, where we will have good water and plenty of fallen wood to use. There is a place about two miles from the village, well suited to our purpose."

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"No," said Mrs. De Wilton, very kindly and firmly, "you will have to ask my husband about this, as he attends to all these matters, but I can't promise you much hope of success. There has never been an encampment of your people on this estate since I have been here."

"No, madam," said the gypsy woman, "the old set of De Wiltons were hard people, and would not allow us to camp upon any portion of the estate, however remote. I have had better account of you and your husband, and for this reason came to ask the privilege."

"I could not grant you the privilege," said Mrs. Moncure.

"If you will only speak a good word for us to your good man," said the woman, "I will tell your fortunes and that of your family for nothing."

"No," said Mrs. De Wilton, "I could not promise to do this. I don't believe in fortune telling. I think it sinful and wrong, and couldn't do anything to encourage you."

"Then you feel as the old De Wiltons felt, do you, lady, and think because we are gypsies, that we ought not to be allowed a resting place, even for the sole of our feet, in this Christian land?"

"No," said Mrs. De Wilton, "I don't feel this way either, but I do believe that you gain your livelihood by imposing upon the ignorance and credulity of others. I think your profession opposed to the Bible, and I think your stay in a neighborhood has a tendency to corrupt the morals of the people, especially those of the young, and for these reasons I could not encourage you to camp among us. I don't say these things to be

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offensive or unpleasant, but when asked an honest question I like to give an honest reply."

"Well," said the dark woman, "I like honesty too, but honesty is a luxury that poor people can't afford; and if our lives, lady, are what you think them, they have been made so by hardship and ill usage, and oppression of our fellow man. The weak in this world are forced to use guile and deceit. It is their only weapon against the strong and wealthy. You see this every day in your dealings with your slaves, but don't impute guile and deception to all of us because some of the ignorant of us practice it. Let me see your hand, lady, and I will soon convince you by what I will tell you that I am not practicing either upon your ignorance or credulity."

"No," said Mrs. De Wilton, kindly, but firmly, "you must excuse me. I have no wish to know my fortune. If it is good it will be a pleasant surprise to me, and if evil I will know it soon enough. I trust all these things to God." Just then the two children entered the room. The woman fixed her keen, dark eyes first upon one, then upon the other.

"The young gentleman," said she, "is yours, the little lady is not."

Mrs. De Wilton, a little surprised, replied, "You guess well, or has some one told you?"

"No one, lady," was her reply, "though it is through no occult science that I ventured that remark. Your little girl, though very fair, has blood in her veins darker than that of the Romany, but though it is dark, it is pure and noble; but she is alien to her very finger tips, and is scarcely

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the companion I would suppose you would select for your handsome boy."

"And why not?" said Mrs. De Wilton. "You say her blood, though dark, is noble. Why is my sweet little daughter not a proper associate for Richard?"

"Because," replied the dark woman, "you do not know what a blending of the different races from which this child descended may develop, and you do not know what an influence she may exercise over your son; it may be in her power to blight his whole life."

"And," said Mrs. De Wilton, "it may be in her power to brighten and purify and ennoble his whole existence. God may have sent her to me for this."

"Only a very pure, a noble and true woman or girl can do that, lady," she replied, "while an ordinary and bad woman sometimes can ruin a man's life forever. How would you like her to grow up a Roman Catholic, and bring your son over to that belief, or should her heathen blood assert itself—make a Mohammedan, Buddhist, or fire worshiper of him?"

Mrs. De Wilton's face flamed with anger at the woman's words.

"I believe," said she, "that you are not a good woman, and I believe your knowledge, if you really possess any, is evil. My children," said she, "go back to the sitting room, and I will be there to talk to you about your music in a few minutes."

"Lady," said the dark woman, "you have talked to me very plainly to-day, and I have not been at all angry; in fact, I like plain talk, when one gives

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it with the grace and sweetness you do. I am really interested in you, and these children are so different from the ordinary type of clay one meets. I did not mean to be offensive, but to suggest some very grave possibilities to you in the little girl's case. Heredity, as learned people call it, or rather the instincts placed within the human and animal bosom by the Creator, are very strong; and are hard to suppress. It is natural to you and to your people to be Protestant; it is equally natural to the French or Spanish to be Roman Catholic, and as this child is evidently of a mixed race, who can say where her divinely implanted tenderness may carry her? You may, lady, and I hope will be able to overcome all of them, and make this child, who is so dear to you, as you would have her be."

"I would regret to see this child become an idol worshiper, and do not think it at all possible, in this Christian land, let her descent be from whom it may. But I shall earnestly strive to have only the broad and non-sectarian doctrines that Catholics and Protestants alike agree upon, taught her, and as she grows older, should she prefer her mother's faith, which was the Roman Catholic, to ours, she shall be at perfect liberty to embrace it; not an obstacle shall be thrown in her way."

"This is very noble of you, madam," was the reply, "but you would not want to see your little boy a Roman Catholic, would you?"

"No," said Mrs. De Wilton gravely, "and I have no fear he will be one. As you have just said, his instincts and raising are all against it. He comes of a good old Protestant stock on both sides. He

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has ancestors who have died for the Protestant faith, and I have no fear that he will be recreant. I even have a hope that God will make him a preacher of his holy gospel."

"Then, lady," said the dark woman, looking her earnestly in the face, "you will be deeply disappointed. Your son will be a butcher."

Again a feeling of anger rose in Mrs. De Wilton's bosom, her face flushed deeply.

"How dare you say such a thing as this to me," said she. "You are indeed a woman of evil omen; you are angry with me, and are venting your spleen upon these innocent children. But I will hear no more from you," and she reached for the bell, but the dark woman remained perfectly calm.

"Do not be so shocked and so angry with me, madam," she said. "I did not mean that your son would be a vulgar, ordinary butcher. But he is his mother's own child, and from you and a long line of ancestry he inherits what the world calls a martial disposition. He will be dressed in a smart suit of clothes with metal buttons; his butcher's knife hung by his side in a handsome sheath, ready for momentary use, and the animals he preys upon will not be the innocent four footed creatures that roam the fields, but his own kind. Indeed, madam, your son will be what is known in this world as a soldier, and the greater number of his own kind he can destroy the greater and more widespread ruin and devastation he can scatter around him, the greater will be his reputation, the greater will be his *éclat* with his fellow creatures. Even now he has the figure and mien of the warrior, the air of command, the gift of impressing

his own individuality upon his fellow man; the eye that never quails, the spirit that never flags or falters, but rises equal to every emergency, and knows no such thing as failure. But with all these attributes he has a very weak spot in the panoply of his armor. He inherits your enthusiasm, your refinement and delicacy of sentiment, your earnest love and devotion to truth, and your dislike to falsehood and sham and fraud in everything, and these are indeed truly unfortunate legacies to bequeath your heir in such a world as this. Should he be crossed in love, a very slight thing, indeed, with the average man or woman, or meet with any other serious misfortune in his early life, it may so overwhelm him, so disgust him with this vain world that he may become what you so earnestly hope for, a preacher of righteousness. Your little adopted daughter, of whom you are justly so proud, if she has as much self-will and worldliness in her make-up as I give her credit for, may be the very one to lead your son the devil's own dance; though for your sake and his I hope not, for bad as you esteem me, lady, I do not wish any evil to befall you or your son."

Mrs. De Wilton replied: "I do not know what motive you can have for talking so to me. I hope we will part with no ill feeling for each other; but I must now go to my children, and will have to ask you to excuse me."

At this hint the gypsy woman arose from her seat. "I have merely mentioned these matters to you," said she, "to convince you that speaking as an ordinary woman and simply from observation, I know whereof I speak, and if I can tell you these

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things from a casual glance into your faces, what might I not be able to tell you if I consulted my art? Would it not be best, madam, for you to make a friend of the gypsy woman?"

"Not in the way you desire," replied Mrs. Moncure. "I can find no warrant in my Bible for the art you profess, and think it would be sinful in me to employ it, but I do feel kindly toward you and what you have said has interested me very much, and I hope we part pleasantly."

"I feel sure we do, madam," said the gypsy, and making Mrs. De Wilton a graceful courtesy, she left the room.

On the lawn she met Dr. De Wilton returning from his drive, and after conversing with her for some time, she returned with him to the house. He held a long interview with her in the library, and at dinner informed his wife that he had given this woman the right to bring her encampment to the place she had mentioned near the village. Mrs. De Wilton was very much hurt over this, as she thought it was demoralizing to the neighborhood; and so it proved. It was something new for the Windemere people; created a sensation, and their camp was crowded with men and boys, and the business of fortune telling, horse trading, etc., was more active on Sunday than any day in the seven. Mrs. De Wilton was greatly surprised that her husband, that stern, inexorable conservator of public morals, should for a moment tolerate, and even lend himself to such barefaced mendacity and immorality, but the superstitious side of the doctor's nature had been strongly appealed to by this woman, and as a consequence he

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had fallen thoroughly under her influence, and from that time to the present these people have an annual encampment upon the Windemere estate. The gypsy queen, as the months and years rolled by, had sought to renew the acquaintance and conversation with Mrs. De Wilton; but that lady, as firm as she was gentle, had quietly declined any further intercourse with her.

Just after Louise had attained her thirteenth year, she and Richard, with a number of other young people of the neighborhood, had joined her mother's and father's church. Louise was the first to advise this step, and as she and Richard were inseparable in everything, and seemed actuated by the same impulses, he speedily felt a change of heart too, and quite a number of the young people were received at the time. This was a proud moment to Mrs. Moncure, her heart overflowed with love for her children, and thankfulness to God. Not only had the evil predictions of the dark woman, not been verified, but her little daughter had joined her own church; and also been the means, God's means, as the fond mother firmly believed, of bringing her son also into the fold. The mother's heart overflowed with happiness. Louise had grown into a beautiful and very intellectual girl; she had inherited either from the light or dark blood which coursed in her veins a great deal of pride and spirit. Her mother thought her a little too fond of dress and admiration, but as these are follies inseparable from youth, her kind mother regarded them very leniently, and never mentioned them, even to Richard. She seemed deeply devoted to Mrs. Moncure, but was al-

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ways antagonistic to the doctor. Though she called him father, she didn't like him, nor did the doctor care for her, and but for the influence she exercised over Richard, and the firm stand taken by Mrs. Moncure, the doctor would not have tolerated her at all. As it was, they treated each other respectfully, usually pleasantly, and avoided unpleasant topics as much as possible.

Richard was indeed his mother's own boy, and a wonderfully handsome, noble looking fellow he was. He had reformed thoroughly, and had during the past five years acquired much learning. He and Louise were far in advance of most youths of their age, and were as inseparable as ever. In fact, their studies, their labors, and their enjoyments were all pursued together. One acted as a constant spur to the other, and at Dr. Hargrave's little school they were at the head of their classes.

CHAPTER XV.

Soon after the close of his school Dr. Hargrave had a long talk with Dr. and Mrs. De Wilton. He told them Richard and Louise were remarkably advanced for their years.

"And I find, my friends," said he, "that it will not be to their advantage to go to school any longer in Windemere. I think they require advanced teachers. They are indeed wonderful children, and I can't tell you how I regret to lose them from my school, but as your friend and theirs, I feel that I should say this to you."

A few days after, Dr. Wan, a gentleman who taught a very fine school in the Valley of Virginia, happened to visit Windemere. Like Dr. Hargrave, he was a preacher, and occupied the doctor's pulpit very acceptably for the two Sundays he remained in the village. His school was very select, and was known as "The Valley High School." He had a class of about fifteen young ladies, and forty young men. Dr. Hargrave thought very highly of this school, and after due consideration it was determined to send the children there, where they would be in association with the very best youths of Virginia, and the south, and where on account of the mixed sexes of the school, Richard

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and Louise could stay together as at Windemere. The morning after the confirmation the children accompanied by both parents started for the new school. They travelled by private conveyance, and stopped at "Weyer's Cave," which was then a great curiosity, and the "Natural Bridge."

Parents and children were most hospitably received by Dr. Wan, and at his earnest insistence Dr. De Wilton and his wife stayed over Saturday and Sunday. They had a very pleasant time with the doctor, his family, and the scholars. Richard and Louise were very happy and popular until about the middle of the third month of their stay; then a great change seemed to come over the scholars in their deportment toward their hitherto much admired class mates. Their former friends grew cold, and colder every day; they were no longer welcome in the school room as they had been. Their class mates changed their seats, and at table they occupied seats by themselves; none of the boys or young ladies seemed to be willing to sit by them. On the play grounds they were never invited to take part in a game, and if they did so voluntarily enough of the boys and girls immediately withdrew to break it up. In fact, in two short weeks this handsome boy and girl had become social pariahs to the rest of the school, and were as completely, and much more unpleasantly ostracised as though banished to some lonely uninhabited island. What had caused this state of affairs with Richard and Louise?

The formidable hydra which Dr. De Wilton supposed he had destroyed at a blow is erecting another crest, and unfortunately for our young

people, has chosen a most favored place and time in which to strike. How, after laying dormant for four or five years, this old story could have travelled with its addenda, all over Virginia, North and South Carolina, and down into Louisiana in the space of two and a half months, is inexplicable. In Scripture language the birds may have carried the matter, but two months after Richard and Louise had entered "The Valley School," Dr. Wan received a letter from the Hon. Mr. Fortesque, of South Carolina, stating his surprise that the doctor should have received into his school a girl, Miss Louise Delmar, of African descent, and of pronounced African physiognomy. And because this young person ate at table with the other young ladies, roomed with them, and sat in the same school room, and in the same classes, he presumed that Dr. Wan must be in ignorance of this. He wrote, he said, in a spirit of friendliness, in the hope that this obnoxious young person might be at once removed, and the doctor's celebrated school receive no injury in consequence.

The same mail brought Miss Eloise Fortesque a letter from her mother, and all that week little excited groups of girls were gathered in their rooms, on the play grounds and other points, talking very eagerly, but in low, guarded tones. "The whisperers" of scripture were getting in their work; not old withered crones, not middle aged village gossips, but bright, eager faced, pretty young girls. In an incredibly short time it was known all over the school, the adjacent village and surrounding country that Dr. Wan had a "nigger" among his scholars. Unfortunately for us in this world,

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the victim of scandal is the last to hear of it, and poor Richard and Louise had been completely tabooed by their friends and schoolmates without the raising of a friendly voice to tell them wherefore.

There was something, however, in Richard's appearance and manner that rendered the boys very careful how they acted, and while they tabooed him, and rather avoided him, they were very respectful and polite. Several days after Richard was called into Dr. Wan's study. His teacher took him kindly by the arm and said, "Richard, I am deeply pained to tell you and Louise some very disagreeable rumors. I have hoped it would die out, but it is becoming so persistent, and is so widespread, that I can avoid it no longer, and I regret it all the more that I feel assured that your sister has from some source been greatly slandered. Here are seven letters I have received upon this subject from seven patrons of my school. Read these, my dear boy, and then you will know why your schoolmates are treating you and your sweet sister so cruelly. I have done everything in my power to allay this storm, but our people in their present excited state where the race question is concerned, have no reason left. I must now go to my school. You sit here and read these letters, then we will decide what is best to do."

"Doctor," said Richard, "please send Louise to me. We will read them together, as they probably concern her as well as myself."

Louise soon entered the room, and they read the letters. Some were very violent. Others demanded the sending away of Richard also, as they

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said, a boy who claimed a colored girl for a sister was not a proper associate for their sons and daughters. Richard and Louise were both surprised and deeply hurt.

After school Richard had an interview with the doctor, and told him all about the old slander. "And for five years, doctor," said Richard, "not one word of it has been heard of in Windemere, and I can assure you upon my honor, that there is not the slightest shading of truth in it."

"I believe all you say, Richard," Dr. Wan replied, "but how can we make these hot headed, foolish Southerners believe it?"

"I don't propose to do this, doctor," replied Richard; "we don't want to be the means of injuring your school, and will leave it in the morning; but on my sister's account, and on account of my poor mother, I am indeed sorry that this has occurred. It will reflect most seriously upon Louise, and will give our enemies, and hers, something to go upon even in Windemere."

"If I could live without my school, Richard," said the doctor, "you and Louise should not leave it. I would stand by you and let the others go. But I am poor, and, were this report to get into circulation, it would destroy my school."

"We know this," Richard replied, "and will not embarrass you by our presence."

The next morning Richard telegraphed his father to meet them at the railway station.

Just before leaving he entered the school room, and asked permission to say a few words to the assembled school.

"I am very sorry, my schoolmates," said he, "to

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have to leave this school in such a manner and sorry to think that you could bring yourselves to treat us so unjustly and cruelly without any cause whatever.

"I protest to you to-day upon my word of honor that the charges your parents have brought against poor Louise are entirely false, and I hope you will live to regret them and see your error and theirs.

"You have done my dear sister a great and causeless injury; her descent is as pure and more illustrious than is that of any one of you."

The journey of Louise and Richard home was a sad one, and much in contrast to the pleasant journey they had had in reaching the "Valley School." Mrs. De Wilton was overwhelmed with grief when her children reached home and told her all that had occurred. Louise was dreadfully grieved and distressed, and Dr. De Wilton's anger and bitterness were very great. After much deliberation he determined that Louise should be sent away.

"She has brought me nothing but evil and trouble ever since she came here," he said, "and notwithstanding the prophecies of the priest, and the predictions of Mary and Dr. Hargrave, it becomes worse every year, and if this continues it will result in the entire ruin of Richard, and the disgrace of my old and illustrious family. I know I will have a time with Mary about it but it will have to come. She will have to give up her infatuation for this girl, and the sooner the better."

But Dr. De Wilton was little prepared for the

manner in which his wife met his proposition to send Louise North to school.

"What are we to do?" he replied. "We have sent her South, and they won't have her. I propose sending her to the very fine school of a friend, where she will have the best attention, and best facilities for learning. Were she our own child what could I do more for her than this?"

"She will be separated from us all, even from Richard, and she shall not, with my consent, be sent so far from home among entire strangers. Remember, Moncure, that she is only thirteen years old, too tender an age to be entrusted to strangers."

Dr. Moncure used every argument, every persuasion, but to no purpose, until a very unexpected ally appeared in the person of Louise herself. She begged her mother to allow her to go.

Mrs. Moncure was very much surprised, and hurt too, at this wish upon the part of Louise to leave her, or rather Richard. She asked her if she would be reconciled to the idea of being away from her, and of being away from Richard.

Louise replied that she "was only a clog and hindrance to Richard, only in his way; that she was a source of constant grief and trouble to her dear mother." By this time, painful as the knowledge was to her, her poor mother had become convinced that the child's heart was really set upon leaving her. At last she told her to talk to Richard, and "if he is as willing as you are anxious, I will not withhold my consent."

That evening she and Richard had a long talk, and when they entered Mrs. Moncure's room,

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Louise told her mother that Richard fully agreed with her, and thought it best that she should go. His mother raised her eyes to Richard. He was very pale, and there were traces of recent tears upon his face.

"And so you too, Richard, think with Louise and your father?" said she.

"No, mother," said Richard, sadly, "I think it is best for Louise to stay here, if she could think so, but she is disgusted with this place and people, she thinks father dislikes her and is very anxious to get rid of her. She wants to leave us, and under the circumstances I don't think we should detain her."

"But you don't want her to go, do you, my son?" said the mother.

"My life will be very empty without her," was the reply. "But I don't think you or I, for our selfish pleasure, ought to throw a straw in her way." Thus Dr. De Wilton scored another triumph over his wife, and Richard made his first sacrifice to duty, and experienced his first bitterness, which in the nature of our civilization and social customs must come to every man who loves a woman with his whole heart.

Young as he was, Louise was all the world to him. From the moment he first saw her, that mysterious passion as involuntary with us as hunger or thirst, or spiritual enlightenment, had taken possession of his heart. The subsequent dislike of his father for this child, the obloquy, reproach, and contempt which the world had cast upon her only drew him more closely to her, and for her sake he could have defied or given up the world and all it

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contained, and this girl, though only thirteen, knew it better than the boy himself. Her pride had been dreadfully outraged by what had taken place at the school, her dislike to Dr. De Wilton had been increased, her dislike to Windemere, where this slander originated was very great; but if she had possessed one tithe of the great love for Richard that he had for her could she have left him under these circumstances? Yet she loved him, or thought she did, much in the fashion of her advanced sister of the present day, who is nearly heart-broken at noon, when she parts with her lover, and is all smiles and pleasure when the next man calls in the evening. Like the sun she beams upon all.

Louise was too young and inexperienced to feel just this way yet, but she wanted to get a glimpse of the world, and during the following week she left, accompanied by Richard and Mrs. De Wilton, for her Northern school. Mrs. De Wilton was very much pleased with the school, and after remaining a day, she and Richard returned home. The mother was deeply troubled over the grief of her son, which was pitiable in his effort to conceal it.

After reaching home, which was home to him no longer, the gentle mother tried in various ways to comfort him, and to divert his mind, but all to no purpose, and on the following Saturday he begged her to let him go to the University, and take a short session there.

"I am sorry to leave you, dear mother," said he, "but everything is so dull and lonely here with-

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out Louise, that I feel I must have a change, or break down completely."

Mrs. Moncure did not chide her son, did not charge him with the ingratitude and selfishness which he betrayed in going away, thus leaving her without son or daughter. She felt for him deeply, and could sympathize with him, and she took steps at once to allow him to carry out his wishes. The next week he started for a new school, and a new field.

Mrs. Moncure's children were now separated. Louise in the North or East, was forming new friendships every day, and acquiring a knowledge of the world, and of books, too, very rapidly, and though a hard student, was enjoying her new experiences to the full.

Richard, a little pale and heavy eyed, was pursuing his studies as earnestly as a boy could who was contending with his first great sorrow, and was preoccupied, and frequently very absent. Why is it, reader, that separations between lovers very rarely affect the woman as they do the man? The mass of womankind are pleasure lovers, excitement seekers, and can readily adapt themselves to circumstances; one excitement exhausted, they seek another, and "absence" too frequently, in the words of the old song, "makes the heart grow fonder," fonder of the other fellow, provided there is one. It made Mrs. De Wilton heartsick to compare the letters of Richard and Louise; Richard tried to write her brave spirited letters, to conceal his real feelings, but the mother had no difficulty in reading between the lines the sadness and dreariness of his life, while the letters of Louise were

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bright and pleasant. For the first time since taking Louise, her mother doubted the wisdom of her course in encouraging Richard to love and care for her as he did.

The separation from her son and daughter under these new and painful circumstances, weighed heavily upon Mrs. De Wilton's spirits and injured her health, but hers was a brave spirit, and she struggled to maintain a calm and serene front. Dr. Moncure was no support to her, as he had never been in any of her many troubles, but was more annoyed and fretted, and out of temper than she had ever seen him, and was destined soon to become more so, for the newspapers of both parties discussed his affairs. Some accused him of entertaining extreme Northern views, while the Northern papers, replying to these articles, complimented Dr. Moncure upon his liberality and humanity, and pronounced him far ahead of his section in philanthropy and absence of prejudice.

Louise was far from regarding herself an object of pity, condemned, rejected, and driven from the South. Her story, which had preceded her, awakened the deepest sympathy and pity in her new land of refuge, and she was warmly taken up by some of the wealthiest and most honored families of the North. Her holidays were usually spent with these people, where she received much attention from old and young, and as she was pretty, refined, intelligent, and possessed of great personal magnetism, she was shown much shy attention by the boys of these aristocratic old families.

So Louise wrote Richard long letters every week, giving him accounts of her pleasant life, and of the

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attention she received from old and young. Richard was delighted that her new Northern friends were so devoted, and that she was so highly appreciated. All the pretty little details which she so carefully gave him of her life there were the prickings of so many poisoned daggers. Richard De Wilton was supremely selfish and jealous of Louise Delmar's love, and he grudged her every attention shown her by any one else. After receiving one of these letters he would sit up late at night trying to forget his misery in study. One day, upon entering his room, he was overjoyed to see his mother. She was shocked to see how careworn her son had become, and he was deeply troubled to see the lines of sorrow a few short months had placed upon her brow.

"I can't tell you, my dear child, how I have missed you," said she, "and I see that you have been studying too hard. I determined to take you by surprise, and from here we will go on to Louise's school. From there we will visit some of the quieter Northern summer resorts, and your father will join us later in the season. Then we will return about the time your holiday expires, and drop Louise at her school, and will go with you to yours, and I sincerely hope that all of us will feel better for this little outing, and for being permitted in God's providence to be together once more." The poor mother was doing the best she could for her children. She knew it would not do to take Louise to Windemere. When she reached Louise's school Mrs. De Wilton was not gratified at heart at the wonderful change in Louise for the better. She had shot up into a very graceful and beautiful

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girl. Her Eastern and French origin both probably tending to produce precocious development, and the absence which had banished the color from the mother's and son's cheeks, had placed lines of care and sadness upon their brows, had wrought nothing but brightness and improvement with Louise, and a happier, more carefree face than hers would have been hard to find. Mother and son had taken Louise entirely by surprise, and her joy at meeting Richard was too unfeigned not to be very grateful to the fond mother. Poor Richard was elevated by it from the very "slough of despond" to the seventh heaven of delight. On the following day they resumed their journey, took in some beautiful Northern scenery, and finally settled themselves at a quiet and pleasant resort.

August was waning when Dr. De Wilton joined his family for a few days' rest and refreshment from his business cares. He was very pleasant, and seemed to enjoy the reunion with his family, but he brought news that was very distressing to his wife. His friend, the congressman of his district, anxious to show Dr. De Wilton his sympathy in his late trouble, and his appreciation of him and his family, had offered a West Point appointment to him for his son. The mother was surprised that the doctor even for a moment should want his son to have a military education. She cited the sad fate of poor Frank, said it would unfit Richard for the management of the estate, and urged every argument in her power against it. The doctor finally proposed to let Richard and Louise settle this mooted point between them. "It will make a man of you, my son," said the father.

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"Richard," said the mother, "you can make a far better and more useful man by receiving the education of a civilian. Leave this to some poorer and more needy boy than yourself."

Then the mother appealed to Louise, but this young lady, who had inherited martial ardor, and a love of brass buttons, sided with Dr. De Wilton and Richard. So the poor mother was doomed to another very great disappointment, and another draught of bitterness was added to her cup by the two children whom she loved better than her life. To do Richard justice, when he saw how his mother was hurt over his decision, he offered to give it up, and pursue his studies at the University; but she knew what a trial this was to him; she knew his heart was set upon a military career, and accustomed to yield to the wishes of others throughout her married life, she made another sacrifice, and the day after Dr. De Wilton's arrival he and Richard set off to stand his examination. Their dream of happiness was over. Richard only spent one more evening with his mother, father and Louise, and left the next day for West Point, while the doctor and Mrs. De Wilton travelled by Louise's school, and dropped her there, and hastened on to their home.

CHAPTER XVI.

Two seasons passed quickly by. Mrs. Moncure did not allow her young people to visit Windemere during their vacation, but met them at some point in the East, and remained there with them during the time. These were delightful vacations to the mother, as well as the children, who grew more and more devoted to each other.

The clouds which had been lowering and growing darker upon the political horizon for long years were upon the eve of breaking. Dr. Moncure was a rabid Southern man, and wanted Richard to leave his school and come home. Richard had the gravest doubts as to the right or policy of secession, but being a Virginian he determined to be governed by the policy of his State.

With a great deal of reluctance Dr. De Wilton consented to his wife's entreaties, and allowed Louise to come back to Windemere with Richard. She argued that the excitement incident to the war would take the mind of the people away from all minor matters, and she could not leave Louise in a country where the uncertainty of war might separate them for years. When the young people arrived they were well received by the Windemere people, who for the time at least seemed to forget

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the occasion and manner of their leaving, and rumors of Richard De Wilton's proficiency in his profession, and of his very high standing in his college had reached Windemere, and rendered him peculiarly welcome to his old friends and associates.

Dr. Moncure was fired with patriotic zeal, and having large numbers of fine horses on his estates, offered to furnish them to young men desiring to go in the cavalry, provided they would give their notes, with satisfactory security. Windemere was in a perfect ferment of excitement, as I suppose was every other place, South or North, but there were a few at least who were not excited over this, but seemed rather sad and depressed. "Mother," said Richard De Wilton, the evening after his arrival, "I wish I had taken your advice and not received a military education. I wanted to be a soldier, and I take pride in my profession, but I never expected to have to use it against my own people. This is indeed distasteful to me."

"I am glad to hear you say so, my son," said the mother. "It ought to be distasteful to everyone that names the name of Christ. What will you do, Richard?"

"There is only one thing for me to do," said he, sadly. "I have been educated a soldier, and will, of course, have to offer my sword to my State."

And in a few days companies were forming, and every moment of Richard's time was taken up drilling them, and teaching them military duty. Richard was now approaching his twenty-first year; his erect boyish figure was stalwart and powerful, and his face was strong, refined and very intellect-

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ual. Even Dr. De Wilton took great pride in his splendid soldier boy, especially when the legislature sent him a colonel's commission. They gave him power to raise a regiment at once, and take the field. He had only been at home two weeks when this good fortune befell him, but so attached had the Windemere youth and men become to him that it was received with the greatest applause.

His old Indian friends had not forgotten him, and in two weeks more a cavalry regiment was enlisted, numbering ten hundred and fifty men, three companies of which were Indians. The next two weeks Col. Richard De Wilton spent drilling and disciplining his men.

He managed to find a little time each day to take a drive, ride or walk with Louise. Every evening was devoted to her, and when accompanied by her mother she appeared upon the parade ground, the most observant would note the change in the colonel.

One evening Richard asked Louise if she would not walk to the old cemetery with him.

"It will be the last time we will be together for a long time, I fear, Louise," said he, sadly. She consented, and in a few minutes they were wending their way toward their favorite walk. They seated themselves in a picturesque spot, and after some hesitation Richard said:

"Louise, this is our last day together probably for a weary time, and may be forever; I have wanted to say something to you for a long time, and only your tender years have kept me silent. But I leave to-morrow to engage in this dreadful strife, and I feel, loving you as I do, that I ought

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honestly and truly to tell you the state of my feelings toward you. From the moment I first saw you I loved you. My love for you has increased with the lapse of time, and I love you, Louise, as no other man can or will love you in this world, and I flatter myself that you are not indifferent to me."

"Yes, Richard, I love you, and have always loved you; you have been a very dear brother to me."

Richard's face flushed. "But, Louise," said he, "you know that I have never felt a brother's love for you. You know that my love for you has been warmer, deeper, quite different from a brother's. Don't tease me, dear girl, on the eve of my departure for the battlefield; we may never see each other again. Oh, Louise! if you love me don't trifle with me at such a time as this."

Louise's face had flushed, but she replied calmly:

"I am not trifling with you, dear Richard. I love you very dearly and truly, but it is only the love of a sister for a very, dear brother. You know how your father has always disliked the thought of your ever associating with me as a brother. What would he say of me if I encouraged any other feeling with you? He only tolerates me now as your sister. Would not he hate me as your sweetheart or wife?"

"Louise," said he, "if you love me as I do you, you could not find it in your heart to talk to me in this way, at a time like this. Oh, Louise! have I been mistaken all these years? After all that has occurred between us, after my devotion to you, after having my heart in your keeping

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ever since I have known you, are you going to throw me aside like this? Don't you know that my whole life is bound up in you? Don't you know that I care nothing for any other woman in this world? Don't you know, Louise, that I love you better than all else in this world besides? Why, girl, I love you better than I do my God. Unsay what you have said, dear child, and acknowledge that you are only teasing me, and only seeing how far you can carry me."

"No, Richard, no," she replied, "I love you only as a brother. It would not be right for me to love you in any other way. It would be treason to our dear mother, to your father, to yourself. And now, Richard, I want you to believe me and to accept me as your sister, for I assure you I can never maintain any other relation to you."

A look of utter surprise passed over Richard De Wilton's face as he heard these words, and looked into the calm, determined young eyes that so steadily met his.

"Louise," said he, "you don't mean this." And then, as a full realization of the cruel words she had spoken seemed suddenly to force themselves upon him, his face paled to the hue of death.

"My God, you cannot mean it."

"But," said the low voice of Louise, in reply, "I do mean it, every word of it, and I want you to believe that I do, and accept it as final. We can love each other as brother and sister, but in no other way."

But even Louise with her determination and worldliness, was scarcely prepared to sustain the part she had taken. Richard De Wilton had en-

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tered that cemetery a youth, he stood before her now a haggard, middle-aged man. Sadness, disappointment and despair had transformed the brave, gallant young soldier as if by the wand of a magician.

He remained for a few minutes silent, as if lost in reflection, then he said calmly:

"I am sorry, dear sister, that I have been so deceived, but I blame my own foolish vanity for what has occurred. Excuse, forgive me for annoying you as I have to-night, and I promise you it shall be the last time; for the future we will be only brother and sister to each other, as you desire. And now, I know I have tired you, let me see you back to the house," and he held out his hands to help her rise from her seat. Slowly they retraced their steps to the house, and this man with an incurable wound in his heart, and on the eve of departure to the battlefield, talked commonplaces to his sister as he had never done before.

Entering the porch Louise seated herself, expecting him to sit by her, but he said he had just thought of something that would take him to Windemere for a short time. It was late when he returned. A light was burning in the sitting room, and when he entered it, he found his mother awaiting him.

"Well," said she, "I could not go to bed without having a good talk with you to-night, Richard. There will be little chance for it to-morrow."

"Yes, mother, and if I were not a selfish brute I would not keep you waiting for me until this

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hour. You are the only unselfish person I have ever known."

"No, Richard, don't say that," said the mother, "but I know you are in trouble, and I know you will not leave home without telling me all about it, will you, my son?"

"No, indeed, mother, I have never had a secret from you, and never will have. My trouble arises simply from my folly and vanity. For long years, in fact since I have been able to reason upon this subject at all, I have been foolish enough to think I possessed the love of Louise; to-night she has undeceived me, and not thinking of disappointment in this matter, feeling as sure of her love, mother, as I do of yours, my surprise and disappointment has been very great."

"And my surprise and disappointment, my dear son, are as great as yours," said the mother; "but you are a timid wooer, Richard, and you can't expect a modest girl like Louise to give in all at once. I feel sure Louise loves you, and you alone, and all she needs is a little time to decide."

"No, mother," said Richard, earnestly, "Louise does not love me except as a sister. She has assured me of this fact several times to-night, and more calmly than you are talking; her decision is final, and I have accepted it as such."

"Then," said his mother, "her conduct and words are greatly at variance."

"We may have mistaken sisterly affection for something deeper and different," said the son, "and if she doesn't care for me, and I am quite sure she does not, I would be the last man, mother, to per-

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secute her with attentions, and you, I know, agree with me."

"Yes, my son," said the mother, "I believe you are right, and we will trust the matter to God, and patiently await his pleasure."

Early the next morning the roll of the drums, and the sound of the bugles awakened the citizens of Windemere. This peaceful little village in the very bosom of the mountains had caught the feverish infection that then prevailed throughout the country. In addition to the regiment of cavalry that had been already raised, they were trying to send a regiment or battalion of infantry also. The sun was scarcely up before the people were all out to see the final parade of the cavalry regiment, and its departure from the village into active service.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE hilarity and enthusiasm of yesterday was all gone. The same people were assembling, but in a very different frame of mind. The first great sorrow of the war was pressing upon them,—the sorrow of separation. At eight o'clock the bugle sounded, and the band began to play "Dixie." The regiment formed, then banners were cast to the wind, and a more gallant looking body of men never marched forth.

Col. De Wilton when leaving the "Hall" that morning had folded his mother in his arms and kissed her tenderly. He had also taken a tender leave of Louise, but when she offered him her lips he had kissed her cheek instead, and hurrying to the parade ground he had placed himself at the head of his regiment. The bugle sounded, the band played "The Girl I Left Behind Me," and they marched out through the village, past the "Hall." Father, mother, Louise and all the servants were at the gate, and the colonel, sad and pale, bowed to them as low as the mane of his charger. This regiment was to act in the mountains of West Virginia, a very unfavorable field for cavalry, and a long way from home.

During the four years that ensued Col. De

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Wilton more than fulfilled the promise of his boyhood, and was regarded as one of the most able, efficient, and courageous officers of the Confederate Army.

After leaving Windemere he was under our greatest commanders, who complimented him very highly in several special orders. His humanity, and love for his own soldiers, his kindliness and generosity to non-combatants and prisoners gained for him a national, almost a world-wide reputation. He saw to the comfort of his own soldiers, he devoted his life and energies to them. He frequently hunted for the wounded on the battlefield, and visited them in hospitals when practicable. He was generous to an extreme, and would divide his last dollar with them, or his last crust of bread. To the unfortunate of the enemy who fell into his hands, whether wounded or prisoners, he was courteous and kind. He offered non-combatants protection and immunity from the consequences of war. Whenever in the enemy's country during this period, he was so noted for his courage as to be frequently called upon to lead the forlorn hope. No peril affrighted him, no duty was too onerous, and his promotion was rapid. The mortality in troops led by such an officer was necessarily very great, yet his men clung to and seemed to love him better than their own lives, and though when leading some particularly hazardous enterprise he would advise those who were married and had families not to follow him, not one of them had ever been known to turn back or falter. He was lenient to the faults of his soldiers, and kind and long-suffering with

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them, provided their offenses were not against the cause of humanity, and then the culprit had little to expect from his commander. When present at the court-martial of a sixteen-year-old boy, who had been caught sleeping on his post in front of the enemy, it was his eloquence that saved his life, and ever after that, that boy would have freely lain down his life for him.

His bosom friend, Col. Charles Hargrave, and chief of staff, had lost one of his arms in trying to defend his commander, and Richard Arnold, the colonel's faithful servant, had twice interposed his own person between Richard De Wilton and the weapons of his enemies. Upon one occasion in the midst of a desperate fight, when Col. De Wilton's horse had been shot under him, a pale, delicate boy sprang from his horse, and offered it to his colonel. De Wilton looked at him with a smile, but declined, saying:

"Your life is as sweet to you as mine is to me."

"Then," said the boy, "mount my horse, colonel, and I will get behind you."

The colonel did so, and they fought their way through their foes, and were received with great enthusiasm upon reaching their command.

A young Indian chief, who as a boy had played with Richard, offered up his life for him in one of the fiercest engagements of the war, and upon one occasion when Richard had led his command as a forlorn hope, and had successfully driven artillery and infantry before him, and for want of support had in turn been forced back, surrounded and captured by the enemy. His commanding officer in a special order complimenting

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him and his command, and, supposing him dead, pronounced the charge the most gallant and daring he had ever witnessed, and said he had fallen covered with wounds and glory. And indeed he was covered with wounds and in the enemy's hands.

A hastily built hospital was provided for him, and physicians were summoned. Every means were used to retain the vital spark and fan it into flame again.

In his delirium he called for Louise. The physician substituted first one hospital nurse and then another, but all to no purpose. He at once knew the imposition they were trying to practice upon him. Waking or sleeping her name was upon his lips, his thoughts seemed to run upon no other subject, until the physician in charge supposed he must die from nervous irritation produced by this intense and ungratified desire. But the ocean divided Louise Delmar from Richard De Wilton, and this is the way it came about.

While Louise was at boarding school a very distinguished elderly and foreign looking gentleman, having first obtained permission from the principal, came to see her. He was very suave and graceful, though his military bearing and bristling mustache made him seem fierce and forbidding. His interview with Louise evidently had great effect upon her, for her step became more firm, her carriage more haughty, and her eyes danced with triumph quite foreign to them. She was naturally secretive, and did not make any one the recipient of her confidence.

During the summer after the departure of the

troops a letter was brought to Louise through the lines postmarked New York, then later she received one postmarked Richmond, the contents of which she did not tell to any one. In the meantime Louise's conscience had troubled her a good deal over her last interview with Richard. She knew all she had said to him had been false, she knew it was in her power to convert his father's opposition into the most earnest heartfelt approval. She knew that penniless and friendless as his mother deemed her, that she would have been overjoyed to have welcomed her as her son's wife; and she knew only too well how disinterested and genuine Richard's love was for her, how he had protected and stood by her in her disgrace and trouble. When she reflected over all these things she could not but admit that she loved him better than any one else, and these reflections made her gentler and tenderer to the mother than she had ever been before. But we read in Holy Writ that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," and was not this cruel in Louise?

They heard from Richard very seldom. He was far from home and out of the ordinary route of travel, consequently his letters were few. When he wrote to his mother he wrote to his sister also, but his letters did not breathe a word of love; and when, late in the fall, about ten o'clock at night, the rapid clatter of horses' hoofs sounded up the old avenue, and Col. Richard De Wilton entered the house of his fathers, his greeting of Louise rather chilled her.

She was surprised at Richard's appearance and manner. He had left her a boy; an enthusiastic,

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foolish boy. He had returned a man, a hardened, weather-beaten veteran, much quieter and more self-contained. All sentiment seemed to have left him, and Louise found it impossible to strike fire from so cold and impassive a temperament as he seemed now to possess.

He was very affable and affectionate, but it was the feeling of a brother. He had taken her literally at her word. Richard De Wilton, the lover, was dead, but Richard De Wilton, the brother, survived him.

This was Friday night. He spent Saturday and Sunday with his family, and at the break of day Monday morning, he, Col. Hargrave and Richard his servant, were on their way back to Richmond, where a brigade and a commission of Brigadier General was awaiting him.

His visit was not at all satisfactory to Louise. She wanted to say something to him of the old matter which she had summarily and positively closed upon the eve of his departure, before he left, but he gave her no opportunity.

One cold, cheerless, bleak day the following month, Louise and her mother were reading, when a carriage rolled up the driveway. No news had been heard from Richard De Wilton for a long time, and the mother was naturally very uneasy about him. The maid entered and informed Louise that a gentleman wished to speak with her in the drawing room.

"You mean mother, not me, Rosa," replied Louise.

"No, Miss Louise," said Rosa, "he asked to see Miss Delmar."

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"Does he look like a gentleman?"

"He is very nicely dressed and I suppose he is a gentleman, but he don't talk a bit like our people."

"Well, Louise," said Mrs. Moncure, "go and see who he is and what he wants, and your curiosity will be gratified."

Louise left and was gone more than an hour, and when she returned her face was aglow with excitement and pleasure.

"Oh, mother!" said she, "I have great news for you; glorious news. It sounds more like a fairy tale than a reality of this nineteenth century. Can you guess who this gentleman is?"

"How should I, Louise?" the mother replied. "Who is he?"

"He represents himself to be the Duke De Vivienne, of France, and believes I am his daughter."

"I do hope it is true, my dear child," said the mother, "but why does he think you his daughter?"

"The name, in the first place," Louise replied, "the manner in which my father acquired me, and my appearance."

"Have you told this stranger, Louise, how your father obtained you?"

"Yes, mother. There was nothing wrong in that, was there?"

"Yes," said the mother. "He is a stranger to you, and may or may not be what he represents himself, and even if he is the Duke of Vivienne, he may not be your father. You would have done better, Louise, to have brought him to me."

Louise's eyes fell. "I am very sorry I did not,

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mother, but he is anxious to have an interview with you at the earliest moment."

"Say to this gentleman that we will be pleased to have him here as long as he will stay with us and that I will see him this evening. Explain to him that I am not feeling well and am scarcely strong enough to see him just yet."

Mrs. Moncure's anxiety on account of her son and the disappointment he had sustained with Louise had preyed upon her mind and she looked ill. She had lived for these two children, and their sorrows were her own, except that she was less capable now of bearing them. So the Duke and Louise dined together alone, Dr. Moncure being absent.

That evening Mrs. Moncure met the Duke in the library. He was very graceful, spoke English fluently though with a strong French accent. Mrs. Moncure, searching his face, could not deny that there was a very strong resemblance between him and Louise.

"Louise tells me," said Mrs. Moncure, with her usual directness and frankness, "that your Grace thinks her your daughter."

"Yes, madam, I have just reason for thinking so. She bears a strong resemblance to the Delmar family, is about the age of my lost daughter, and, knowing how your husband, the doctor, acquired her and my unfortunate wife, I have no doubt in the world that Louise is my own dear daughter. The servants who sailed with my wife and daughter were entrusted with a locket containing three pictures, one of myself in my general's uniform, one of my wife with her coronet on her brow, and

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one of Louise herself. Now, madam, if this locket is still extant, and in your possession, there is a secret cavity in each back, which I think I still remember the secret of opening. Each back contains a piece of very thin paper giving a brief history of each family from which Louise is descended. One is written in French, the other in East Indian, and if your adopted daughter is my real one, she has upon her left shoulder a very small but distinct birthmark; at least it was there when she left me, and could scarcely have faded out in this time."

"I have the locket you speak of," said Mrs. Moncure, "and the birthmark you mention is still very distinct upon Louise's arm."

The Duke proceeded to mention other testimony, and in a short time convinced Mrs. De Wilton that he was really the father of Louise. When Dr. Moncure reached home, and the Duke was duly presented to him, he placed in his hands several letters from prominent men in the North and South vouching for his identity. Great was the doctor's surprise and chagrin, too. He had had the opportunity of marrying his son to the daughter of one of the wealthiest and most illustrious men of Europe, and through foolish prejudice and selfishness, had let it slip through his fingers. Louise's mother was an East Indian Princess, and Louise at the present time was, in addition to being the daughter of a French Duke, Princess Oudh of India, in her mother's right, and possessed an immense Indian property. The doctor thought of all this, and how foolishly he had acted, felt very bitter and much annoyed.

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Hoping to propitiate the Duke and regain something of what he had lost, he told the Duke the whole history of his connection with Louise and her mother. He dwelt upon Richard's conduct in taking the life of the trader, and how Richard had stood by her in all her subsequent troubles and persecutions. The Duke listened most courteously to all the doctor said, and replied that he was sorry and grieved that the people of Virginia and the South were so prejudiced and narrow. He was also sorry that his kind friend the doctor had had so much trouble and annoyance in protecting his little girl, and that he should always feel the liveliest gratitude to the doctor and his good lady for their kindness and generosity to his wife and daughter, but he thought under the circumstances that he ought to remove his daughter from a country where she was giving her kind friends and benefactors so much trouble.

The doctor hastened to correct this: telling him that the people had ceased to persecute Louise, and that she was indispensable to his wife at the present time. But the doctor had one to deal with who was as astute and selfish as himself. The Duke did not intend his handsome daughter to fall into the hands of an untitled Virginian engaged in a rebellion, and who would probably come out of the war a poor man; he had a much grander destiny in view for her than that, and very quietly and courteously, but very persistently, insisted that his daughter should leave with him. He wanted to finish her education to prepare her for the world in which she was to move, and then would bring her back to see her kind friends, and

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to live with them if it was mutually agreeable. So a week after the Duke and Louise took their departure. He made some very delicate hints at remuneration, which were, of course, declined: Louise was deeply affected at leaving. It was a far greater trial than she supposed it would be, and she sobbed on her mother's bosom and begged her to ask Richard to think of her and not forget her.

This occurred before the war had been in progress quite a year. Louise had been a great comfort to Mrs. Moncure in her troubles and trials, and the anguish of parting was very severe. The poor mother never recovered from it. The second day after Louise's departure she took to her bed and had a severe illness. From that time until the period of which we are now writing, she was an invalid. When the news reached Windemere of Richard lying wounded, probably unto death, in a Federal hospital, the grief of the mother was almost uncontrollable. The doctor had taken rather a prominent part in political affairs during the early part of the war and could not trust himself among the enemy. So Dr. Hargrave volunteered to cross the river and go to him, and take two nurses. The following morning they started, but when they reached the Potomac the Federal authorities received them very roughly and refused to allow them to proceed any farther. This was the third year of the war, and the animosity of the sections was becoming greater every day. On the third day Dr. Hargrave and the ladies reached Windemere, completely broken down and thoroughly discouraged. That same evening

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Richard Arnold came to Windemere direct from the hospital. He brought news of his master's very sad condition, and said that Dr. McNulty and the other physicians thought it impossible for him to live unless some one could be found to take Louise Delmar's place to him. Mrs. De Wilton was dreadfully distressed. She was not able to undertake the journey. Rosa Arnold, a sister of Col. De Wilton's faithful valet, asked to be allowed to go. "I could not make him think me Miss Louise," she said, "but he would know me, madam, and I would try to nurse him faithfully."

Her brother thought he could get her through the lines, and the next morning they started. It was late in the evening when they reached the hospital. The young girl approached the bedside of the wounded man with a noiseless step; the nurse, who was sitting by him, made room for her, and she drew a chair and sat down. As she timidly placed her hand upon his fevered brow. "Louise," said he in a weak voice, "is it your hand?"

"No, no, Marse Richard, it is not Miss Louise's hand; they wanted me to deceive you, but I can't do that."

Her voice was soft and tremulous from excitement.

"And who are you?" he asked.

"I am Rosa Arnold, sir," she replied.

"And am I not at Windemere?"

"No, sir, you are at the hospital, and I have come to nurse you. Your mother is at Windemere, and has sent me to you."

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"Well, Rosa," said he, in a very weak voice, "you are a good, faithful child, and I am glad mother has sent you."

"The doctor says you must not talk. He wants you to get some rest."

"Well," said he, closing his eyes, "tell me all about Windemere—all about my dear mother. I will listen to you."

So Rosa told him of the happenings in and around Windemere, and finally he succumbed to a sleeping draft he had taken, and slept for several hours. When he awoke he asked the one question which had been on his lips for days and nights: "Where is Louise? She was here when I went to sleep?"

The colored girl told him gently that he was mistaken, and that she had come from Windemere to nurse him, and not Louise.

Then he burst into tears and sobbed like a child.

"Oh," said he, "if she could only be here to hold my hand and close my eyes, I would ask nothing more."

He was dreadfully weak, and his mind was in sympathy with the weakness of his body. Then he asked Rosa where Louise really was, and she told him truthfully that the last letter her mistress had received from her she was in Italy, but that they had not heard from her for nearly four months.

The truths this girl told him, the sympathy she manifested, seemed to soothe him, and he again dropped off to sleep.

For weeks after he lay very seriously ill, then

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began to improve. He was constantly attended to by his faithful nurse, Rosa, and her brother, and it was not until nearly Christmas that he was able to leave the hospital on parole, and return to his home at Windemere. Mother and son were mentally shocked at each other's appearance, and mutually overjoyed at meeting once more in this vale of tears.

Bitter disappointment and deferred hope had reduced Mrs. De Wilton to little else than a shadow, and it did not need the critical eye of the medical man to tell that her days were numbered. Richard, during his long enforced separation from his mother, had thought of her constantly, and the one wish of his heart, the one object of his existence, was to be with her once more to tell her how bitterly he regretted ever having crossed or disobeyed her in anything, and to prove his love and tenderness for her in the future by act as well as profession. His friends flocked around him and he was pressed to visit them, but so anxious was he to be with his mother that he went as seldom as he could and devoted himself to her. There was one subject that Richard evidently did not like to talk upon, even with his mother, but one day when she was telling him of Louise Delmar's leavetaking, and how she sobbed upon her bosom, and asked her to ask him not to forget her, but to think of her and love her, he replied, very sadly, that he was trying to forget Louise Delmar. "I suppose," he said, "I acted very foolishly when sick and delirious, but it was the weakness of body and mind alike that caused it. Louise is now a great and wealthy

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woman, and I know will marry some one with title, rank and wealth to match her own. She is very ambitious; but, mother, if I had the opportunity of marrying her this morning, I would not do it."

"Don't say that, my dear son," said the mother. "We never know what is to occur; this is a world of mutation, and you don't know how soon you may have it in your power to have this great wish of your heart gratified. I believe that Louise, with all her waywardness and folly, loves you better than she does any one else in this world, and if, Richard, your ways should unexpectedly be smoothed for you, and you had the opportunity to marry this girl whom you have so loved from childhood, you would not, because of her childish folly, destroy your own happiness and hers by refusing to do it, would you, my son?"

"Nothing would induce me to marry Louise now, mother," Richard replied. "You say she loves me better than she does any one else, and she shows this love by calmly refusing me when I was leaving her for the battlefield in the midst of a dreadful war. She leaves you childless, and you have never recovered from the blow she then inflicted upon you. While your life is eaten up with anxiety and grief for her desertion of you, and your apprehension on my account, the few letters she writes you are filled with her social triumphs, and the gayety of the life she is leading. If she cared for me as a true and genuine woman cares for the man she loves, as you through your life have cared for my father; if she loved you, mother, as she professes to love you, and as she

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certainly ought, could she feel as she does; could she write you such letters as these?"

"I think, Richard," said the mother, "you draw too heavy an indictment against Louise; she is very young and frivolous, I know; her conduct toward you and me, too, has been reprehensible, but I think her youth and her bringing up here among very quiet surroundings is a great extenuation for her, and I hope and believe that she is yet, at heart, a true, genuine and faithful woman."

"Well, mother, if she does love me, it is with an ordinary, commonplace love, that doesn't deserve the name. Her treatment of you, after all you have done for her, after all the affection and tenderness you have lavished upon her, shows that she is incapable of feeling a proper or strong love for any one. Mother, I assure you upon my word of honor, that, poor as I am to-day, compared with Louise, I would not marry her if there was not another woman in the world. Marriage, in my judgment, is a most solemn and sacred affair, not to be lightly entered into. Louise is the only girl I have ever loved, and I have been bitterly disappointed in her, and for the future, I intend to live for you, and for my people here, and bestow no further thought upon matrimony."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MRS. DE WILTON, bereft of her daughter, and approaching the "bourne from whence no traveller returns," clung most earnestly and tenderly to her son. As no prisoners were being exchanged, she fondly believed and hoped that she would have him with her, and that he would be safe from the perils and privations of the cruel war, which had well-nigh blasted his country, and turned it into a desolation. But even in this, her last hope, she was doomed to a bitter disappointment.

A Northern general of high social standing had been captured by the Confederates; a strong pressure was brought to bear upon the Government of the United States for his release; and an exchange was agreed upon. The Northern general was sent within their lines, and General Richard De Wilton was notified by courier that he was exchanged and at liberty to enter the service again when so disposed. This was a heavy blow to mother and son. Richard De Wilton could not shut his eyes to the fact that his mother was failing rapidly, and was anxious to remain with her to the end. He could have pleaded ill health, for he had by no means regained his former status, but his standard of honor was very high; he asked

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his mother what he should do. Her eyes filled with tears.

"I know, my dear son," said she, "what you think you ought to do, and as much as I want you with me, much as I shall miss you, I will not be in your way. Do what you think is right, and what you think your God will approve of." And on the commencement of the following week, Richard De Wilton, with a heart of lead in his bosom, tore himself from his poor mother, and plunged once more into the horrors of civil war.

The Confederacy was then in its last throes, the end was rapidly approaching, and its chiefs, as drowning men will do, were catching at straws, and devising many chimerical and desperate remedies for an incurable disease.

When Richard De Wilton and his faithful servant, Richard Arnold, reported in Richmond, De Wilton was at once summoned to the executive mansion. The president wanted to employ him in a secret and very dangerous service in the enemy's country.

Richard hesitated about accepting it. The executive impressed upon him the immense importance of this service, and the wonderful results that would follow from its successful accomplishment, and finally he undertook it. He threw his whole heart and soul into the accomplishment of his mission, but surrounded by treachery and espionage, and by a people inimical to him, it resulted in disaster, and through the faithfulness of Richard Arnold, he barely escaped capture, and ultimately death with his associates. This faithful servant, present at the surprise and capture of

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Richard's friends, escaped on account of his color. At the risk of his life he bore the intelligence to Richard, who was a few miles away. Through his assistance, after several weeks of hardship and danger, Richard succeeded in reaching the Southern lines once more, where he was at once placed in command of two divisions. He went at once into active service in the South, where the close of the rebellion found him in decidedly an awkward situation. His associates and subordinates in his adventure upon Northern soil had been seized, tried and were then under sentence of death by the gibbet, and as his participation in this adventure was well known to his enemies, he was afraid to trust himself to their tender mercies.

About a month after the surrender of the Southern armies, stragglers from General De Wilton's command began to drop into Windemere. When the army surrendered he was in the extreme South, and it took his Windemere followers some time to reach their home.

His mother, now reduced to a shadow, looked anxiously for her son. She knew her departure was near at hand, and only this great wish to see her boy once more, to have him smooth her dying pillow and close her eyes, and to hold his hand until all was over, seemed to detain her upon this side of Jordan.

At last, Captain Sawyer, one of the bravest, most faithful and most reliable of his followers, was reported as having arrived. The captain was on crutches, having been severely wounded in the leg, and looked a fitter subject for a hospital than a traveller over many miles of barren country.

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All that he loved or cared for he had left in Windemere, and when the war was over, and he not able to follow his general away, he hastened to return home. The evening after his arrival he drove to the "Hall," hobbled up to the door and asked for Mrs. De Wilton; she had heard of his arrival, and he was brought at once into her presence. She was sitting in her easy-chair, and her constant attendant, Rosa Arnold, was sitting on a stool by her.

"I am indeed glad to see you, Captain Sawyer," she said, "and I hope you will excuse me for not rising from my seat."

Something rose in the captain's throat, that for a moment lost him utterance, a mist was before his eyes, and when he found his voice it was with deep emotion he replied:

"I am truly sorry to find that you are not well."

"Thank you, captain," she replied, "and I am sorry to see you on crutches and looking badly; I think we can sympathize with each other. But, captain," she said, "I hope you will not be like the others who have come from the war. I hope you bring me some news of Richard. I am so anxious to hear from him, and to see him once more." A deep groan escaped Captain Sawyer.

"Oh!" said the mother, in great alarm, "he is not dead, is he? Do tell me the worst."

"No, indeed, madam," replied the captain. "When I left your son he was in better health than you or I. In fact, madam," said he, "I would not have left him at all if I had been able to continue with him."

"Well," said the mother, "why didn't he come

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with you? Why does he lag so, captain, when he knows I am so anxious to see him?"

"He didn't come, madam, because he could not," replied the captain. "A son never loved a mother more than he does you, and he is as anxious to see you as you are to see him."

"Please, captain, tell me why he cannot come to me. Please let me know the worst," said the mother, piteously.

Then the captain told her about her son's situation, and why he had concluded to push on to Mexico, and enter the service of Maximilian. When he was through with his recital he took a crumpled, somewhat soiled letter from his pocket and handed it to her.

"Your son was engaged most of the night, madam, writing you this letter. I am sorry I have soiled it, but my suit was old and dirty. I feared the news I have brought you would give you pain, and I am sorry to be the bearer of unpleasant tidings to you, but as my general entrusted it to me, in preference to any one else, I know it was my duty to come and tell you all."

"Captain," said the mother, "I appreciate your feelings and am grateful to you. I did not know this, and have been fondly hoping every day that my poor boy would come; but I hope God will enable me to say from my heart, 'Thy will be done,' but, oh, I did want to see him so before I was called away."

After Capt. Sawyer left the room Rosa drew a low chair by the side of her mistress, and seating herself in it, waited for Mrs. De Wilton to speak. But she sat with her son's letter in her hand, lean-

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ing a little forward in her chair, and was silent.

"Rosa," she softly said, "turn up the lamp and read me Richard's letter." It was very long and very pathetic, and the mother was deeply affected. General De Wilton was evidently very sad as he wrote this farewell to his mother. Gradually the mother's excitement seemed to subside, and as Rosa read on she became perfectly still. The girl did not notice how still her mistress had become until she finished the letter.

"Can she have fallen asleep?" she asked herself. She raised the lamp so that the light fell full upon her face. The gentle mother had indeed fallen asleep, but it was the sleep of death. During the reading of her son's last letter the chastened spirit had taken its flight.

At eventide four days later the body of Mrs. De Wilton was laid in its last resting place. Windemere had never witnessed a larger concourse of people than assembled to attend the obsequies and a sadder assemblage had never been drawn together in any age or country. And amid the tears and sobs of the community this much tried gentle follower of Christ was laid to rest. Her pure, warm heart and refined, sensitive nature fitted her very poorly for the trials and troubles of this harsh and cruel world.

Dr. De Wilton was much disturbed over her death. The cares and troubles of this world, and above all else, the deceitfulness of riches, had blinded the doctor to the true condition of his wife's health; and though a physician by profession, and naturally an observant man, he had been so engrossed as to persuade himself that his wife's

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ailments were not serious. As the true state of affairs forced themselves upon the doctor something like regret and remorse took possession of him and he was very uncomfortable and unhappy.

Dr. De Wilton had been most fortunately situated during the war. In falling back the Southern forces had obstructed the main macadamized road through his estate by felling timber and burning bridges. Dr. De Wilton had added to these obstructions, and consequently he was rarely visited by the enemy. He was too deep in the mountain and too far from base even for the guerilla to make much use of him. So, when the lowlands around him were pretty much desolated, and agriculture and grazing almost impossible, the doctor was comparatively undisturbed. Five successive crops of wheat he raised and stacked, and let them remain stacked during the whole war. His cattle and other crops brought him large sums of money. He and Frank McTavish entered into joint speculation. Frank had great opportunities and ran the blockade into the enemy's country. At the same time he bought stock for the Southern armies, and as the war progressed Dr. De Wilton bought a large and valuable estate in one of the lower or tidewater counties, paying for it in Confederate money. Later he bonded his money and with the bonds bought tobacco in the South and had it stored at different points, and some cotton also. Through Frank McTavish he also handled a great many goods from across the river, and as there was no question of price in those days, but the necessities of people forced them to buy wherever they found them, we may conclude that

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the doctor and Frank made a very good profit out of these ventures.

At the conclusion of the war Dr. De Wilton was not broken up and ruined, as were most of his neighbors, but was a thrifty and prosperous man. He had lost his negroes and some other property, but as the products of the country were scarce, and money somewhat depreciated, prices rose to a very high figure and he realized for his immense accumulation of wheat the handsome price of \$2.50 to \$3.00 a bushel, and his ventures in tobacco and cotton equally successful, so, before the conclusion of the year in which the war closed, Dr. De Wilton had more money at his command than he could use, but with his wife dead and buried and his son in a foreign land where he would probably never see him again. The god of this world had thoroughly blinded his eyes, avarice had taken hold of his heart, of his whole being, and he was more eager for the accumulation of money than he had ever been. He and Frank McTavish engaged extensively in selling their less fortunate neighbors fertilizers and stock, horses and cattle. The spirit of speculation was then rife in the land. A feeling of unrest and anxiety for the accumulation of sudden wealth had taken possession of the people, which seems to have grown with them from that time to the present.

About two months after the death of Mrs. De Wilton a letter came directed to her from Italy, from the Princess Oudh. The doctor replied to it at considerable length and very warmly. He was as anxious to get the Princess back to Windemere as he had been formerly desirous of getting her

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away, and now hoped that a match could be arranged between her and Richard.

In the meantime Richard De Wilton and his little band, after undergoing innumerable hardships and facing a great many dangers, arrived at the court of Maximilian. Though destitute and reduced in appearance to the condition of vagabonds, they were most kindly received by that very noble gentleman, who showed them every attention. In a short time he and his little band were in condition to render their new master good service. The Emperor thought very highly of Richard and his followers, but was surrounded by faction and jealousy and could not do for them as he wished. However, he gave Richard the rank and emolument he had enjoyed in his native country, employed him mostly in his own household, where he became a very great favorite, and sometimes sent him with his party and a company or two of Mexican troops to reconnoiter and gain information. In less than six months after Richard had entered Mexico a rumor reached Windemere that he had been killed in battle. It could not be traced to any authentic source, but in a few days the newspapers mentioned it as a rumor and later on as a fact. They claimed that he and his command had been ambushed, and that the Emperor very strongly suspected treachery among his own followers and thought that one or more of his own followers had been in collusion with the enemy.

Richard's last battle had created a great sensation throughout the United States, and even the civilized world, and anecdotes of his courage,

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generosity and humanity were given in Northern and Southern journals alike.

At Windemere, where he was so loved by his soldiers, the grief of the people was great and sincere, and his father was much troubled at his loss. He was already in deep mourning for the mother and was now bereft of his son, and the people felt great sympathy for him.

The war had been over a little more than a year when the stage brought to Windemere a colored man whom at first no one knew. He was tall and haggard and had that peculiar ashen hue always incident to the negro in poor health, and it was not until he addressed himself to some one in the crowd that he was recognized as Richard Arnold. Richard Arnold was with his master in his last battle, and report said was killed in the early part of the action. His sudden appearance at Windemere after this lapse of time looked almost as though he had risen from the dead. A crowd immediately gathered around him and to their anxious inquiries he replied that he had been shot in the early part of the fight and had been left for dead on the field. When he came to he fell into the hands of a band of Indians, who carried him into the mountains. For a long time his life had been despaired of, and it was with difficulty that he had prevailed upon his captors to allow him to return to his native country once more. When asked if he knew anything of the death of his commander he said, "Only what he had learned from the public prints after the Indians had released him."

But as time passed on it was rumored that

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Richard Arnold knew more of his master's fate than he cared to tell. He and Captain Sawyer had been observed to hold several very earnest private conversations, and then it was said Captain Sawyer had gone to "The Hall" and had a talk with Dr. De Wilton about his lost son. What had passed between the doctor and the captain no one knew, but a severe quarrel ensued and the captain had not measured his language to the doctor, but told him he loved money better than he did his son, or his own soul, and for all his cant and hypocrisy there were better men in a very bad place than he.

The doctor was not himself; he was preoccupied and absent minded. In fact, he was in love. He had met his second fate at the house of his friend Frank McTavish. Whether by accident or design, Frank and his busy little wife had a very attractive and highly connected young widow visiting at their house when the doctor happened to call there. Frank was not at home, though momentarily expected, and as Mrs. Frank was very busy the task of entertaining the doctor devolved upon Mrs. McGowan, and she did this so agreeably that dinner was announced before the doctor had noticed the flight of time at all. After that the doctor's business with Frank increased greatly; at least he had to call much more frequently to attend to it than formerly. But Mrs. McGowan's visit, like all temporal affairs, had to come to an end, and when Captain Sawyer called upon the doctor it was upon the eve of Mrs. McGowan's departure.

His wife had not been dead quite a year, and the doctor was a great observer of the conventionalities and proprieties of life, but so fearful was he

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of losing this glorious prize that he had determined to throw every other consideration to the winds and "pop the question" that very evening. The doctor had arrayed himself in his handsomest attire and had ordered his buggy (a brand new one), and was going to have his fate decided at once.

About three months after this, Richard, General De Wilton's servant, again left Windemere, and though he had told no one but Captain Sawyer and his own family, it was rumored that he had gone to seek Richard De Wilton through the prisons and mines of Mexico, a task of great danger and hardship, and one that a strong, robust man might shrink from, and Richard Arnold was far from being either robust or strong.

After several weeks a letter arrived for Rosa, and she disappeared from Windemere, and days and weeks and months and years intervened and no tidings reached Windemere of Richard De Wilton or those who had gone in search of him.

Dr. De Wilton's wooing sped propitiously, but his intended was not fired with the enthusiasm and ardor that burned in the doctor's bosom, and she insisted upon a due observance of all the conventionalities; and it was quite two years after the death of Mrs. De Wilton before the doctor had the pleasure of leading the second Mrs. De Wilton to the altar.

He was married in Richmond, at the bride's house, and a very grand wedding it was.

A little less than a year after his first wife's death, the doctor received a handsome invitation to the wedding of his former ward and daughter, the Princess Oudh. She married a prince of the

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royal blood and immense wealth. She wrote the doctor that she did it to please her father and was very anxious the doctor should attend the wedding.

So the world wagged on, and poor Richard De Wilton and his mother were apparently as much forgotten by their friends as though they had never existed.

CHAPTER XIX.

DR. DE WILTON had married a very gay woman. He was foolishly fond of her, and as she was fond of society his house was filled with gay people most of the time.

"Verily the fashion of this world changeth," saith the scripture, and Windemere was a verification of this text.

The doctor heard frequently from his former daughter, the Princess. She had sent a handsome present to his bride when they were married and she seemed to take a great interest in Windemere.

One evening the doctor was reading a New York paper, when a notice met his eye that shocked him greatly.

"Information wanted of General Richard L. De Wilton of Virginia," was headlined very conspicuously, and just below it was the following:

"Having reason to believe that General Richard De Wilton, who was reported as having been killed in Mexico, in battle, several years ago, is still living, he is hereby informed that a friend, a faithful friend, is most anxious to hear from him or see him, and that he will hear something greatly to

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his advantage by coming in person or writing to the following address."

This was two years after the doctor's marriage. He wrote to the paper asking them to give him the name of the author, and the editor replied that he was not at liberty to tell. He then wrote to the address mentioned in the advertisement, but received no reply. This notice for several weeks was in several papers in the United States and Mexico and Canada, and was then withdrawn.

Dr. De Wilton could gain no clue to the originator of these notices, but if he had used his usual acuteness he might have known that no one would have been so likely to take so deep an interest in his son as Louise Delmar.

Louise was not happily married. It was a marriage of her father's making, and in rank, wealth, appearance and manner, it seemed to be better than the marriage of the average woman, even in high life. The Prince was not ill-looking. He was decidedly fashionable in manner and appearance, and had Louise never met Richard De Wilton she and her prince would probably have jogged along the road of life patiently and quietly. But do what she would, she found it difficult, almost impossible, to banish Richard De Wilton and his mother from her thoughts. Frequently, amidst the gayest scenes, they would be with her, and in the privacy of her own apartment, when trying to get the much needed rest which a life spent in active pleasure seeking requires, the memory of the pale, sad mother and the heartbroken son would render sleep impossible, and despite her efforts to rid herself of the dead past, she was constantly

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living over again her old life with mother and son.

While in this state she crossed the English Channel with her father to spend the summer in a private health resort in the highlands of Scotland. She was always glad of any excuse to get away from her husband, and she had sent him into India to look after her fortune there.

Her father was an invalid and had been advised by his physician to go to this little village for the air and water. Soon after reaching there, she was taking a walk with her father one morning, when she met two women. Their dark faces and fantastic dress induced her to think they belonged to an encampment of gypsies hard by. As she glanced at the women there was something startlingly familiar about the older one. She felt that she had seen her before, and all the remainder of the day she tried to remember where and under what circumstances she had seen her, but not until evening, when her maid was dressing her hair, did it come to her. Her maid asked her permission to visit the gypsy camp that evening with her lover.

"Why do you want to go this evening, Annette," her mistress asked, "won't to-morrow do as well?"

"No, madam," the girl replied, "the gypsy queen leaves in the morning, and people say she knows everything, and I want her to tell my fortune."

In a moment Louise remembered the woman. It was she who had that interview with her mother years ago. "She seemed to think very badly of me then," thought Louise to herself, "and she probably will think no better of me now; but I will see her and ask her some questions."

"Yes," said she, "Annette, you may go to the

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camp this evening, and I will disguise myself and go too. I don't want my fortune told, but I want to ask her some questions."

In an hour's time, accompanied by her two servants and disguised herself, Louise set out for the encampment.

When they entered the tent the gypsy queen was sitting on a pile of cushions. She was a little greyer, a little more wrinkled than when years ago she had seen her at "The Hall," but little changed indeed. She glanced keenly at the three, and then said quietly to Louise:

"Come forward, madam. I will talk to you first; your servants can wait your pleasure."

Much surprised, Louise walked forward to where she sat.

The dark woman took her hand, examined it closely, and then asked her what she wanted to know.

"I want to ask you a question or two in regard to the fate of a friend," said she. "He is dead; I want you to tell me how he died."

"And this friend," said the dark woman, "was the gallant boy with the bright, fair hair and those lovely, dark blue eyes and sweet mouth with whom you used to play long ago. What need to tell you the manner of his death. You gave him his death wound when he marched away at the head of his regiment upon that bright spring morning years ago. This wound rankled and festered from that time until death came, and whether it came to him by rifle bullet or sword thrust or by beast of prey rending and tearing his poor, wounded, helpless body, it was welcome to him."

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Louise had turned very pale while the woman was speaking and had to hold to a tent pole for support.

"Mother," said she, sadly, "you are very severe, and I deserve all and far more than all you have said, but please be merciful to a poor, unhappy creature, and tell me the manner of his death. Tell me how he died, and if he died thinking of me, loving me or hating me for my base conduct toward him and his mother?"

"Why ask impossibilities of me?" said the gypsy. "After the lapse of all these years, after his bones have mouldered to dust, how can I tell you the manner of his death, or if he was thinking of you or not when the spirit left the body? You know and I know that he died upon the battlefield, a bloody, treacherous battlefield, in the power of inhuman, barbarous enemies. Can't we easily imagine the rest? If man at his best estate is vanity, what is he when dominated by the most cruel and vindictive passions known to the human race, surrounded by blood and carnage, deserted by his God, and relieved from all fear of consequences by the license of war? Is it hard to conjecture what the fate of an alien and helpless enemy would be, cast among incarnate fiends like these?"

"No," said Louise. "You are very hard upon me, but what you have told me I have spent many a sleepless night and night of agony in picturing to myself. I thought you, who are said to know everything, could tell me something, mention something, that would mitigate my suffering, and give me some consolation amidst my trials and

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troubles, but, mother, you had no compassion upon me when we met long ago, and I was only a child then, and you have none for me now after the lapse of all these years."

"It was not my wish to be harsh or unkind then; nor is it to be so now," said the woman, in reply, "but when talking to some people it is natural for me to tell them the truth, and the truth generally hurts, but you are different now. Give me your hand and let me see if your future contains anything to comfort you."

She took Louise's hand and scrutinized it long and earnestly.

"Is it your lost lover, the noble general, you care to inquire for?"

"For whom else could I inquire?" was the reply.

"Well," said the woman, "you want me to tell the truth, of course?"

"I do," was the reply, "if it kills me."

"Then," said the woman, "he is not dead at all. You will see him again, and seeing him will give you no pleasure. It will only increase your vain regrets and remorse."

"And when," said the princess, "shall I have this great privilege?"

"I don't know," was the reply; "I don't think it will come to you very soon."

"Don't think that I wish to do anything wrong, that I wish to do anything my husband would disapprove of, but, oh! madam, if I could only kneel at his feet and ask forgiveness for the sins I have committed against him and my dear mother, too. If I could only tell him how falsely and self-

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ishly I have acted, and how I have suffered for it, I believe I could die happy."

"You will meet him," said the woman, "but you may not have the opportunity to tell him all this. In the meantime you will soon have another invalid on your hands; your husband will return from his present journey in a decline, and you had better do what you can for him, from a sense of duty, if from no other motive, for he will probably not be with you long."

"I received a letter from him yesterday," the princess replied, "and he was well."

"And yet," said the dark woman, "it will be as I tell you."

"Can you tell me anything of Richard De Wilton's present whereabouts, and what he is doing?"

"Nothing," replied the woman, "except that you and he are to meet again, and that the meeting will only be productive of heartache, anxiety and anguish to you."

The princess left a well-filled purse with the gypsy queen, and then it was that she inserted her notices in the various papers of the country.

Mrs. De Wilton was never superstitious, and she tried to disabuse the minds of Richard and Louise of it. With Richard she had been successful; but Louise, with all her fine education and association, was full of it, and she believed what the gypsy woman had told her implicitly. When the fall had brought back her husband in very poor health from India, her belief was proportionately strengthened. However, her advertisements in the various papers remained unanswered. But not to be baffled, she employed two very shrewd detec-

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tives, who were instructed to search Mexico carefully and to try in every way to obtain information in regard to Richard De Wilton. For three years she left nothing undone that money or human ingenuity could devise to gain some tidings of him, and utterly failing in all her attempts gave up in despair.

During this time she had lost first her husband and then her father. For three years after, with a female friend, she retired from society and occupied one of her estates in the south of France. It was a grand old place, and she and her friend lived in retirement. She was much missed by the gay world of society, as she was one of the wealthiest and most influential of its votaries. Her friends were continually begging her to return to the world and occupy her old place in it, but she steadily refused.

That autumn she and her friend embarked suddenly for America and ultimately arrived at Windemere, where she rented one of Dr. De Wilton's houses. Dr. De Wilton and his wife received her with the greatest cordiality, as did most of the people in and about Windemere. A real live Princess in this little community created quite a sensation, and little else was talked of. But there was one man at least in this community who did not share the general feeling in regard to the princess, and this was Captain Sawyer.

CHAPTER XX.

WHEN she first met the captain on the streets of Windemere she had bowed and smiled, but the captain had walked on, smoking his pipe as though he had not seen her at all.

A few evenings after that she had called upon him at his mill and requested an interview. The captain drew himself up with military precision, and excusing himself on the ground of being busy, coolly turned his back upon her.

The doctor and his wife were kind to subserviency.

When she asked the doctor to tell her what grounds Richard Arnold had for supposing Richard De Wilton alive, he replied, "None whatever," but told her all about the interview between himself and Captain Sawyer.

She induced him to allow advertisements to be inserted in his name in the principal newspapers in the United States, Mexico and Canada for Richard De Wilton and his servant Richard Arnold. These advertisements were pathetically worded and represented the father as being extremely anxious to see his long lost son once more. They continued weekly for two years, but produced no result whatever, and the princess finally came to the conclu-

sion that Richard De Wilton was indeed dead. She could realize that there might be motives to keep him from replying to her advertisements, but she could think of none that would prevent him from replying to his father's. If he had no affection for him, there would be a large property coming to him at his father's death; there would be no one else to inherit, and this of itself would be motive enough to influence the large majority of mankind. About this time it was rumored that Captain Sawyer, in returning home from his mill late one night, while crossing the new cemetery, had seen a ghost and been very much frightened by it. Louise Delmar had felt a great desire to hear what Captain Sawyer had to say about Richard De Wilton, but he had stopped her so sternly and rudely that she had never approached him since.

She had been thinking strongly of leaving Windemere. Her retirement in France had been respected, but it was not so in America, and during her stay here several gentlemen had crossed the Atlantic, penetrated the country to Windemere, and had boldly sought her hand.

Before returning to her own country she wanted to have a full and free talk with the captain. To accomplish this she determined to call upon him at his own house. So she walked over to the captain's one evening. He was sitting on his porch smoking his after-supper pipe, and did not see the princess until she was opening the yard gate. As she ascended the steps the captain arose very stiffly and bade her good evening.

"Won't you have a seat, madam?" offering her a chair.

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"I am much obliged to you, Captain Sawyer. I am sorry to intrude myself upon you, for I know that I have been unfortunate in incurring your displeasure, but if you will tell me in what way I have given you offense I will make you the humblest apology I can."

"You have never given me offense, madam," said the captain. "I have never said so."

"No, sir," said the princess, "you never have in words, but no brave soldier, Captain Sawyer, would treat a lady with the rank discourtesy you have me, unless she had offended him deeply. Please," said she, "be frank with me and tell me what I have done."

"Well, madam," said the captain, "an honest question always brings an honest answer from me. Personally you have done nothing to me, but you have broken the hearts and ruined the lives of the sweetest, noblest lady that this world has ever held and of the bravest soldier and the most gallant gentleman I have ever known."

Louise Delmar flushed, then turned very pale.

"You are very severe, Captain Sawyer," she replied, "but not more so than my conduct merits. But if you knew how bitterly I have grieved over my perfidy to those dear friends, how earnestly I have longed and do long for their presence, how many restless nights and days of anguish I have passed in thinking of them, you would forgive me and pity me."

"I have already done this," the captain replied, "for I have seen from your conduct that you are not as cold and hard as I had at first supposed you. I have seen you weeping at her grave, and

have seen your eyes wet with tears when you did not suspect the presence of any one. Though I am a rough man, my own heart told me why you wept, but if I had known your feelings a little earlier, if I had known your anxiety to rescue your friend from a fate worse than death, I believe, through your help, it could have been accomplished."

"Oh! Captain Sawyer, how cruelly you have misjudged me. How gladly would I have helped in this matter, to the expending of every cent I possessed in this world. Oh! if I had only known of this."

"Well, madam, regrets are vain," said the captain, "but money is now the lever that turns the world; with it you can do anything but open the gates of heaven or hell, and if, when his negro servant tottered into Windemere, more dead than alive, but still willing to spend his last breath in his master's service, he and I could have procured money enough to have bribed those demons who had him wearing his life out in the prisons I believe Richard De Wilton would be alive and among us to-day. But I went to the cruel man he was taught to call father, and I laid the case before him, told him that Richard Arnold and myself were willing to brave all the dangers and hardships attendant upon such an undertaking, provided he would furnish the money and see that my family did not suffer during my absence, and I was insulted and ridiculed for my pains, and made little of for believing the stories of an irresponsible negro. After this do you wonder that I was slow to make application to any other per-

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son? If his own father discredited Richard Arnold's story, whom could I ask to believe it; if he refused his aid, whom could I ask for aid?"

"But Richard Arnold did go to seek him, did he not?"

"Yes," was the reply. "Mrs. De Wilton, a short time before her death, had forced upon Rosa's acceptance a small sum of money, which she gladly gave to her brother to be used for his master's redemption. This colored man with a white man's principles did not hesitate even with a paltry sum. In poor health, he set out to hunt his master, and from that time until now I have never heard a word from him. I have no doubt that Richard Arnold has long since fallen a victim to his zeal in his master's behalf. The Mexicans hated him but little less than they did his master. He went back there in disguise, which I think they penetrated, and he was made to suffer for his temerity.

"Madam," said the captain, solemnly, "I do not believe there is the slightest hope of finding either General De Wilton or Richard Arnold. If I did not feel assured that both are dead, I would gladly go myself. I know that Richard De Wilton is dead, and I firmly believe that Richard Arnold is also."

"How is it possible, Captain," said the Princess, "that you can know Richard De Wilton to be dead?"

The captain hesitated for several minutes before he replied, and then said:

"I suppose you will laugh at me, madam, but I will tell you what I have never told my wife. I have seen Richard De Wilton's spirit."

"No, Captain," replied the Princess, "I will not laugh at you, but if this were to come from any one less courageous than yourself I would not credit it."

"I am not a believer in ghosts," said the captain, "but what I am going to tell you is as true as gospel. Five weeks ago to-night I had been sitting up by old Mr. McCready. About eleven o'clock two other men came in, and as I had been sitting up a good deal, I told them I would go home. The night was very beautiful, the moon shone as bright as day, and as I am crippled, and was in a sort of musing mood, I walked very slowly. My path ran across the new cemetery, and when I reached the stile separating the cemetery from the field, I sat down for several minutes taking in the scene. I then slowly continued my walk. As I neared the De Wilton lot I saw a man as I supposed kneeling upon Mrs. De Wilton's grave. I was within ten feet of him, when in some way I stumbled and I let my stick fall, making a little noise. The figure arose quickly and glided away from me. The moon was shining brightly and there was neither tree or shrub to shelter him from observation.

"In rising he had cast a sidelong glance at me, but I could not see his face. As he glided away I noticed that his shoulders were much stooped, not like Richard De Wilton's at all, but as I looked carefully, it was the back of his head that I recognized, and supposing that Richard De Wilton was really before me in the flesh, I hallooed out at the top of my voice, 'General De Wilton, stop, I want to talk with you; don't you know your old friend,

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Jack Sawyer?" The figure stopped its gliding, noiseless motion, which, in my excitement, I had not noticed, stopped for a moment, and then turned slowly around and faced me, and, my God! madam, what a spectacle I witnessed! It was indeed the face of Richard De Wilton, but so ghastly, so marred that not a friend of his on this earth could have looked upon it; in fact, it was the face of his spectre. As I stood spellbound, gazing upon this apparition, a smile, which added to his ghostliness and uncanny appearance, passed over his face, and slowly waving his hand to me he again turned from me and quickly glided behind a tree, and as he waved his hand I could see the moonshine through it as plainly as though it had been made of gossamer instead of flesh and blood, and then, madam, I am ashamed to admit to you that a nameless horror took possession of me, and throwing away my stick I ran home as rapidly as a badly frightened boy or woman could have done, and I, who have never feared anything, who have looked death coolly in the face a hundred times, who have met men with firearms, swords and bayonets without quailing, gave way completely before this thing of vapor, and fell fainting upon my own doorstep, where my wife and a boy staying with her found me, and of course the boy had to tell the gossips that I had seen a ghost."

"Yes," said the Princess, "I had heard this rumor, but the reality is indeed far worse than the rumor. Are you sure, Captain Sawyer, that this was an apparition and not Richard De Wilton himself?"

"As sure, madam," said Captain Sawyer, "as

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you are sitting in that chair. Now what possible motive could Richard De Wilton have for avoiding me if he were in the flesh? If he wanted his presence here kept a secret to whom would he have applied to supply his personal wants and to have kept his secret, but Jack Sawyer, one of his most trusted and faithful officers?"

"Very true, Captain," said the Princess.

The Princess was very sad indeed and began her preparations for her homeward journey.

The good people of Windemere were sorry to part with her, and numbers of them assembled to say good-bye.

The Princess entered the doctor's finest carriage and waved her handkerchief as long as she was in sight, then Windemere knew her no more. She was accompanied by her friend and her servants.

The evening after she reached Washington Lord Fitz Aymer called upon her. He was an old acquaintance whom she had known before her marriage. The next day several of her friends belonging to the American colony in Paris called also. Lord Fitz Aymer was a handsome, agreeable young nobleman. He told the Princess that he was just in from the West, where he had been looking after his ranch and stock and was on his way home, leisurely taking in the country as he travelled.

After stopping several days in Washington, they all took the train for New York, where they met a number of old friends. Sad and disappointed as she was, she always had a capacity for enjoying the pleasures which this world affords. So she visited among her friends and time passed pleasantly.

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She was a very beautiful woman, just in the prime of her womanhood, and at an age when some good judges think a woman's charms show to the greatest advantage. The wealthy and select company with which she was thrown vied with each other in showing her attention. The men were envious of each other, and the women anxious to secure her patronage and favor.

Two weeks glided quickly away, and the morning before her departure arrived. She and Lord Fitz Aymer and three other friends were to board the big ocean steamer the next morning at nine o'clock. As they were all breakfasting together, Col. Maitland was announced. He was a great club, yacht and horse man, and had called to offer them a last drive behind his spirited horses. One of the ladies replied that he would have to explain his absence for the past two evenings before they could think of driving with him.

The colonel smiled and blushed at her raillery, and after much questioning told them that he had been to Dr. Althrop's mission with a friend to hear a peculiar preacher, or teacher, and at their request he proceeded to describe the experience.

"Dr. Althrop's mission house was an old railway warehouse, and is in one of the least attractive localities in New York. When we reached it, though very early in the evening, it was filled by as motley a crowd as I have ever seen, ranging from the city tough and cut-throat to the respectable laboring man, and all the way from him up to people of the highest fashion and standing. The aisle was blocked with those who could not find seats. The preacher was the strangest and most

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unnatural looking man I have ever seen, and the most interesting speaker I have ever heard. His language is plain and simple; he attempts no oratory, no eloquence, and yet there is something about him and his discourse that is wonderfully attractive. I gathered from his preaching that he favors the simplest form of religion, and believes in a literal interpretation of scripture and a literal application of it to the wants and requirements of the human race. I sat there and listened to him and was surprised when the time arrived to leave, and looking at my watch I found he had been speaking for more than an hour. Last night I went back again, and was more interested in him than the night before. Dr. Althrop wanted him to preach in his handsome city church, but he declined, preferring the mission house and the mission congregation. He has been preaching here two weeks, and to-night is his last discourse, and I look for something very interesting from him, and I should like you all to hear him."

The Princess smiled, and turning to her friend, Lady Richmond, remarked: "Don't you see how it is, Florence, the colonel prefers this long-haired, sensational preacher to us, and to keep from hurting our vanity, is trying to get us to express a preference for him too. For the first time since I have known you, colonel, I fear I will have to accuse you of bad taste."

"Your badinage is too pleasant, Princess," replied the colonel, "for me to feel otherwise than complimented by it, but our law doesn't judge a man before it tries him, and you can't accuse me of bad taste in this matter until you have listened to

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this gentleman yourself. Then, if you liken him to the long-haired, sensational people to whom you have been accustomed to listen, I will plead guilty to any charge you may choose to bring against me."

"We will have to gratify the colonel, and go with him and hear his preacher, as it is quite evident he prefers his discourse to our delectable society, upon this the last evening of our stay, too."

So, after a good deal more talk and badinage it was arranged that the party should attend the mission appointment that night. So, early in the evening, plainly dressed to avoid notoriety, they entered the mission house and found seats with the other well-to-do people of the city, who were there in some force.

The old wareroom was filling rapidly. It was a mission of the roughest kind, and the old building with its naked rafters and joists, the rough platform at the far end which served as a pulpit, its rough seats, its unwashed and uncouth audience generally contrasted strongly with the little knot of more favored people in the more favored seats that had been assigned them.

At length a great quiet fell upon the assemblage and two men were observed coming to the front of the platform. One was rather short, heavy-set and dapper in appearance, and presented to the audience the familiar and well-known person and features of Dr. Althrop, a deservedly popular and admired preacher of that day.

The other man was several inches taller, and but for a stoop in his shoulders, would probably have exceeded six feet. His shoulders were broad, his

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chest powerful, and his figure strong and robust. But his face was more remarkable even than his person, and was pale to ghastliness. His close-cut hair and handsome beard were heavily streaked with grey. His dark eyes seemed to almost transfix one by their earnest, burning gaze. His face, as he stood before his audience, was sad even to sternness. His black suit, well worn and well brushed, was threadbare in several places and gave evidence of long and constant wear.

As these two men stood before the audience, Lord Fitz Aymer felt a convulsive grasp upon his arm and turning he beheld the Princess, her face deathly pale, her eyes fixed upon Mr. Winston with a terrible expression in them.

"Who is he?" she asked, in a low voice of deep emotion.

Greatly surprised, he replied in a whisper, "Mr. Winston, the evangelist, whom we have come to hear."

"No, no," she replied, "you can't tell me that." And forgetful of her surroundings, oblivious of the eyes fixed upon her, completely carried away by the wild excitement of the moment, she sprang to her feet, and holding her arms out to him, exclaimed in tones of deepest pathos:

"Oh, Richard, my brother! my more than brother! have I met you once more after all these weary years?"

The thrilling pathos of the tones, the wild actions of the Princess as she struggled with her friends, and with the crowd to get nearer to the preacher, produced great excitement, which was increased by the unfortunate lady falling in a dead

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faint into the arms of her friend, Lady Richmond.

Mr. Winston remained perfectly calm through all this scene, but after she had fainted, he and Dr. Althrop came down into the audience and elbowed their way to where the Princess lay. Mr. Winston gazed earnestly into the face of the prostrate lady. He then returned to the platform, and taking a seat, waited for the excitement to subside, while Dr. Althrop remained to render what assistance and consolation he could.

The loss of consciousness with the Princess was of short duration. She soon came to herself again and though her friends had ordered her carriage, she positively refused to leave.

With white face and burning eyes she sat in her seat supported by Lady Richmond. Not for a moment did her eyes wander from this man's face. He began his discourse by telling them that he was about to talk to them upon a very unprofitable subject, "Self." "With the Patriarch I can say that few and evil have been the days of the years of my pilgrimage upon this earth, and very few indeed have I devoted to the service of my Divine Master. But brief as is the service I have tried to render my heavenly Father, I feel a conviction **that my course is almost run.** That the work he has given me is almost finished, and that my incumbency of earth is now of very short duration. In declaiming the truth to you, my friends, I have been as gentle and mild as the nature of the truth to be declared has permitted me to be. It is not my wish to give offence, and if I have been guilty of discourtesy toward any in this audience, I humbly ask their pardon, but in preach-

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ing to you, it is absolutely necessary that I declare the truth to you, as I find it in Christ Jesus. This truth is frequently offensive and even intolerable to the natural man. The promulgation of it, long years ago, cost our blessed Saviour His life, and how many of His followers since then have fallen victims to it? The gospel of the meek and lowly Jesus, the whole trend of the Holy Scriptures of Almighty God are directly antagonistic and irreconcilable to our worldly natures. They show us our utter weakness, depravity and dependence upon God. They teach us lessons of self-abasement, self-denial, and humility, entirely at variance with the natural man. To become servants of God, and followers of His Son, it is necessary to give up many things that are ingrained into our very natures, to give up things that are as dear to us as the breath of our nostrils, and to practice an entirely new system so repulsive to the natural man, so entirely at variance with every wish of his heart, with every aspiration of his nature, that it is only through the great mysterious power of the Almighty that this change in the heart of man can be wrought. It is not produced by human reason, for He conceals these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babies. But He gives us the hearing ear, the understanding heart, then reveals Himself unto us as He does not to the world. Without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness. But it is the nature of man to require something to worship, even when his carnal nature unfits him for the worship of anything. The heathen worships idols, made by his own hands.

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The sun, moon and stars have been objects of worship. Great has this desire been upon the part of mankind for something to worship; for something to lean upon and trust in. From earliest antiquity, we have two churches spoken of in the Bible, the true and the false. One church, recruited from the ranks of the world, composed of carnal elements, and allied to the world, has been powerful and aggressive, and has worked mankind in the successive ages of the world unutterable woe. The other, a little persecuted remnant, despised and rejected of men, has at one time in the world's history been reduced to eight persons, at another ten righteous persons could not be found in a great and populous city; and at another, God, to encourage His prophet, informs him, that amidst all the people of Israel He had reserved seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Later on, Christ speaks of this people as a little flock, and describes the narrowness of the path and the straightness of the gate which leads to eternal life, and says, 'few there be that find it.' And this little flock scattered over the world, in a hopeless minority, constantly assailed by the world, the flesh and the devil, would long since have succumbed to their many trials and discouragements, had it not been for the vivifying and sustaining power of this mysterious principle of Godliness, which enables them to resist the temptations and allurements of the world, and all the combined attacks of the powers and principalities that the Devil can bring to his aid for the destruction of good. But the church of man has none

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of this to contend with, going generally hand in hand with the world; always partaking of its nature and pursuits, self-assertive and vainglorious, it has prospered and grown and multiplied; while the church of God and of Christ has merely existed. And to-day, my friends, it is doubtful if it exists on this earth as a separate organization. But in the various sects, some of Paul, some of Apollos and others of a more modern name, scattered so thickly over this and other civilized lands, we hope and believe that there are a few of Christ, and have little doubt that out in the big world, unconnected with any religious denomination, you will find some of these chastened, humble people, and even among the dark and benighted heathen nations we have Scripture warrant for believing that this spark of Heavenly fire exists. Man believes in numbers in every great movement he may inaugurate, his first care is to make it popular; gain the ear of the multitude. While God, whose ways are in no sense ours, attaches no importance to them whatever, but chose the weakest and smallest people of antiquity as his people. When later on He sent His son to this people He cast His lot with the poorest and most obscure, rather than with the learned, powerful and wealthy. Ought we not to attach great importance to these simple plain Scriptural facts? In reading our Bibles we observe the two churches or principles, existing from the time of the fall of Adam. Abel's offerings were accepted of God; while Cain's were rejected, and as the sons of earth multiply and acquire wealth and power we see the contrast be-

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tween God's church and man's church more sharply defined until it reaches its climax in the crucifixion of our Blessed Redeemer.

"In my opinion that age greatly resembles the present. The shoulders of poor humanity were then, as now, encumbered with 'burdens grievous to be borne.' Human wisdom and the traditions of men were then, as now, substituted for God's holy word, and fanaticism, in its many different forms, and the vainglory of man mistaken for religion and the glory of God. Even our women——"

He never finished the sentence! As the last word passed his lips a convulsive shudder seized him, and simultaneously the sharp crack of a revolver broke the silence that had prevailed. He staggered back and would have fallen to the floor had not Dr. Althrop caught him in his arms. As he did so he heard these words, almost in a whisper: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Mr. Winston the evangelist was dead. The assassin's bullet had pierced his heart.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE shock to the Princess was so great that suddenly her strength gave way and she once more became unconscious. Taking advantage of this her friends summoned her carriage and removed her to her hotel. The moment she recovered consciousness she wanted to go to the dead man. Her physician positively forbade it and prescribed rest and quiet, but as the night advanced they had to let her have her way, for fear the excitement would bring on brain fever. At three o'clock her carriage was ordered, and accompanied by the doctor and Lord Fitz Aymer she was driven to the mission house, which was dark and closed. But by arousing the neighborhood they finally obtained the information that Mr. Winston's remains had been removed to a nearby undertaking establishment, to which they drove. There they were informed that the body had been removed by friends in the night to a poor and obscure portion of the city. The party again entered their carriage and were rapidly driven to the place indicated. A square from it they left their carriage and walked to the house. A feeble light, scarcely discernible, gleamed through a window and through a crack in the door, which was ajar.

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Stepping softly up the steps they gently and noiselessly opened it, but recoiled at the sight that met their gaze. The room was almost in darkness, but the long black burial case was plainly seen, and dimly outlined at the head of it was the figure of a woman. She was weeping softly, and her suppressed sobs alone broke the stillness. At the foot of the bier sat a man, his head resting upon his hand, and his figure in the uncertain light almost as dim and spectral as everything else that this uncanny room contained. Lord Fitz Aymer, though a bold man, hesitated about entering. Not so with the Princess. She pushed by his lordship and entered the room and in a tone tremulous with excitement she asked if it was not the body of Richard De Wilton.

"No, madam."

"And who is it, then, that is here?" she asked.

"The murdered evangelist, Mr. Winston," was the reply.

"I know better. You can't deceive me. Mr. Winston and Richard De Wilton are one and the same."

"Madam," was the reply, "General De Wilton died in Mexico; Mr. Winston was killed last evening in the old mission house by an assassin."

"I know this," the Princess replied. "I witnessed it. But you labor under a great error. This Mr. Winston was General De Wilton. I am his adopted sister; he was my lover; I can't be mistaken."

"And I regret, madam," was the reply, "that you are mistaken. I am the lifelong servant of Mr. Winston, and I assure you that the body lying

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here is his and not that of your brother, as you suppose."

The Princess stepped to the table and turned on the light. The room was now a blaze of light and showed the speaker who sat at the foot of the cas-
ket to be a broad-shouldered, dark mulatto man. Louise Delmar gazed at him earnestly, and then a light of recognition dawned upon her countenance. She sprang forward and extended her hand.

"Oh! Richard Arnold!" she exclaimed, "how could you try to deceive me? Next to my brother I would rather see you than any living man, because it is in your power to tell me all about him. You have indeed been his lifelong servant. Will you not accept my hand? Do you still adhere to the gross, cruel deception you have been trying to practice upon me?"

The colored man, looking the Princess in the face, calmly replied:

"I have no right to take your hand, madam. My name is not Richard Arnold. You labor under some strange delusion."

"If your name is not Richard Arnold, what is it?" said the Princess, drawing back and looking deeply hurt, but not convinced.

"My name is Richard Arundel."

"You may say what you please," said the Princess vehemently, "but I would take a solemn oath this moment that you are Richard Arnold and none other, General De Wilton's servant from early youth. You and he and I played together constantly when we were children."

A sad smile for a moment played over the man's countenance. He gravely shook his head.

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"I am sorry, madam," he replied, "but you are mistaken."

"I can prove it," said the Princess, "by this woman. Don't you know," said she, turning to the woman, but she addressed the empty chair; the woman had gone.

"Where is the woman who sat there when we entered?" she asked. "I believe I know who she is."

"You are again mistaken, madam," the man replied. "There was no woman there."

"Do you mean to tell us," said Lord Fitz Aymer, "that a woman was not sitting in that seat when we entered?"

"Yes, sir. Through the lonely vigil of this night I have first occupied one of these seats and then the other. And now," said he, "I have tried to treat you with courtesy, and have replied to all your questions to the best of my ability, and hope, madam, you and your friends are convinced that you have committed a grave mistake by coming here. I am my master's only friend and servant. I have taken charge of his remains by his own verbal and written request. I have loved him living and I love him dead, and shall obey his instructions in death as implicitly and literally as I have obeyed them in life. He died a poor man, and only wants a poor man's burial, and now that I have given you all the information I can, and you must see that there is no reason for your remaining here, I hope you will excuse me and forgive me for asking you to leave me alone with my dead."

"No," said the Princess, "you have not satisfied

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me in anything. You are Richard Arnold. Richard De Wilton lies there dead, and a woman, a weeping woman, occupied that chair at his head when we entered this room. But let me see my brother's face once more and I will burden you with my presence no longer."

The man slowly, rather reluctantly, raised the white cloth from the face. A placid and peaceful expression rested upon it, and he looked as though he were in a profound sleep. The Princess stepped forward, but the colored man stepped between her and the dead, and she divined his intention in a moment.

"Don't be alarmed," she said, bursting into tears, "I have no intention of kissing him. I am not worthy to do that; but, if you will allow me, I will kiss his hands."

The man stepped gravely back, and, kneeling down, she pressed kiss after kiss upon his shapely white hands, while her tears fell thick and fast upon them.

At last Lord Fitz Aymer gently raised her and led her from the room, weeping as if her heart would break.

The day, grey and sad, was dawning once more over the city as Lord Fitz Aymer and the Princess drove back to the hotel. He told her he would see the authorities and have the dead man, whom she was so certain was her long lost brother, given into her custody.

"This negro can, of course, have no claim to his body which will weigh a feather in the eyes of the law to your claim."

The Princess was too anxious to think of

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justice or even the dead man's wishes. She, Lord Fitz Aymer and the doctor drove rapidly over the city until they made the process of law to suit their wishes. Then, with the proper officers, they again repaired to the tenement house.

It was nine o'clock that morning when they again reached the tenement house, which they found "empty, swept and garnished." Nothing remained to tell that the party who occupied it the previous night had ever been there.

Lord Fitz Aymer set inquiries on foot at once to ascertain what had become of the dead man and his colored friend, but they were useless. Nothing more was ever heard of them.

The deep grief and excitement of the Princess were too much for her delicate nerves, and the following day, instead of going with her pleasant companions on her voyage to France, she was confined to her bed with burning fever. For several weeks she was very ill, and when the fever left her she was as weak and helpless as an infant. She gradually, however, regained her health and strength, sailed for France, and the land of her adoption knew her no more.

After reaching her home an occasional letter, in ever lengthening periods, would reach Dr. or Mrs. De Wilton. After a time they ceased entirely, and for long years Windemere has not had a titled man or woman within its borders, and, in fact, they do not know whether the Princess is living or dead. But if she lives she is old, and probably, apart from her money, as uninteresting as most old people become. Her life is probably a sad one, and deservedly so, for in her girlhood she broke the

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hearts of two of her most devoted and faithful friends. She was false to the man she loved, and sacrificed mother and son to the god of this world, and just in proportion as she was sensitive and good and spiritual she suffered for this great sin. A coarse nature, a nature given over to the world, as many of the present day are, would not have felt it at all. But with the Princess as with most of us her awakening came a little too late, and those things so easily attainable at one period of her existence, which she could have had in her poverty and obscurity, she found utterly unobtainable in her affluence and greatness, though she sought them in sorrow and in tears.

Windemere still exists, but not as in former days. It has increased in size, and is scattered over more territory than formerly. Dr. De Wilton, in sympathy with the age in which he lives, and with the burning desire for accumulation gnawing upon his vitals, has broken through all the customs and traditions of his ancestors, and, among other things, has sold off a great portion of Windemere's many lots for houses.

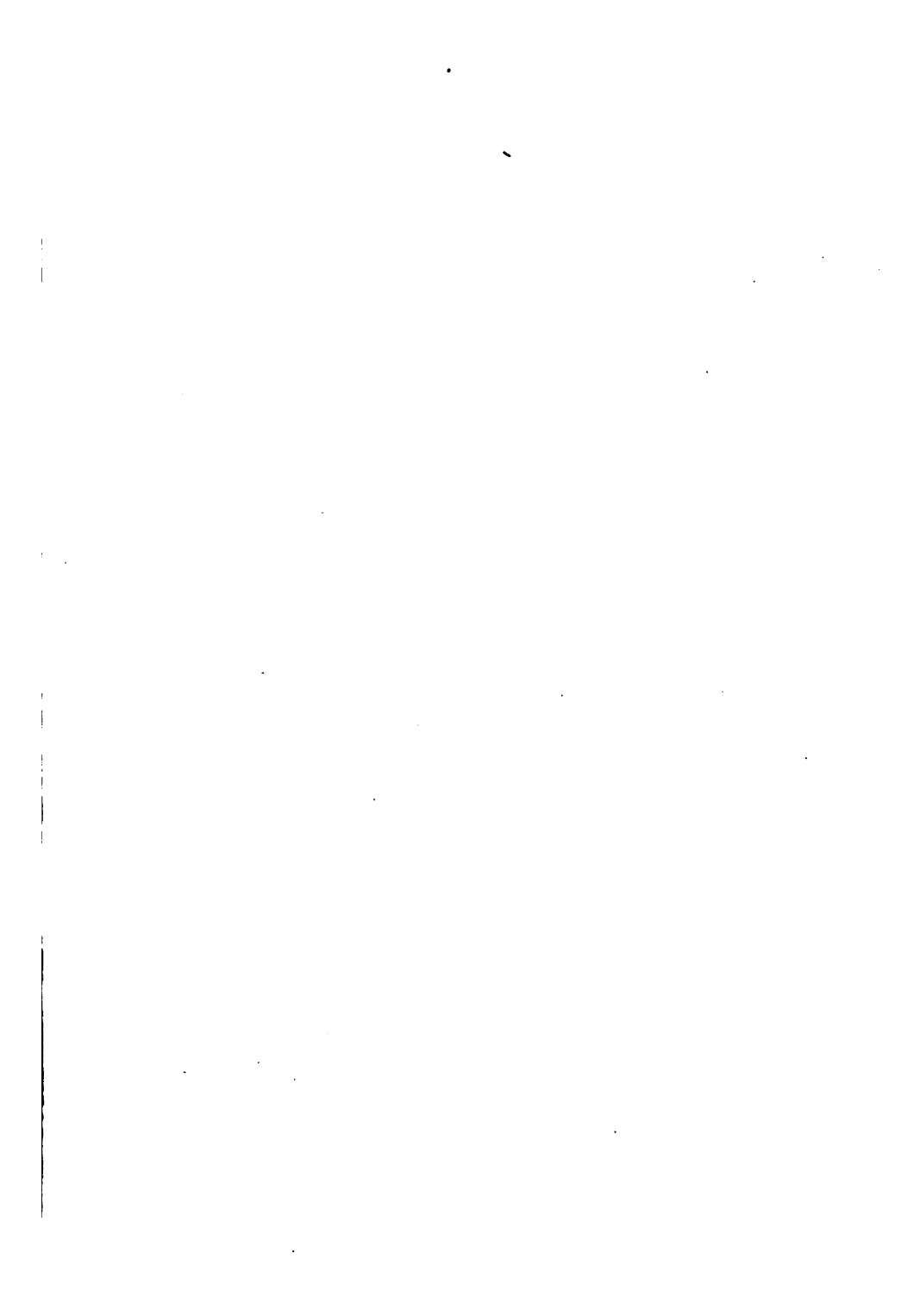
The doctor thinks that Providence has dealt very harshly with him in denying him an heir. He frequently speaks of his son Richard as being a noble boy, and regrets that his mother should have raised him a dreamer and given him impracticable ideas of religion and morality which unfitted him for the stirring, healthy life of the nineteenth century.

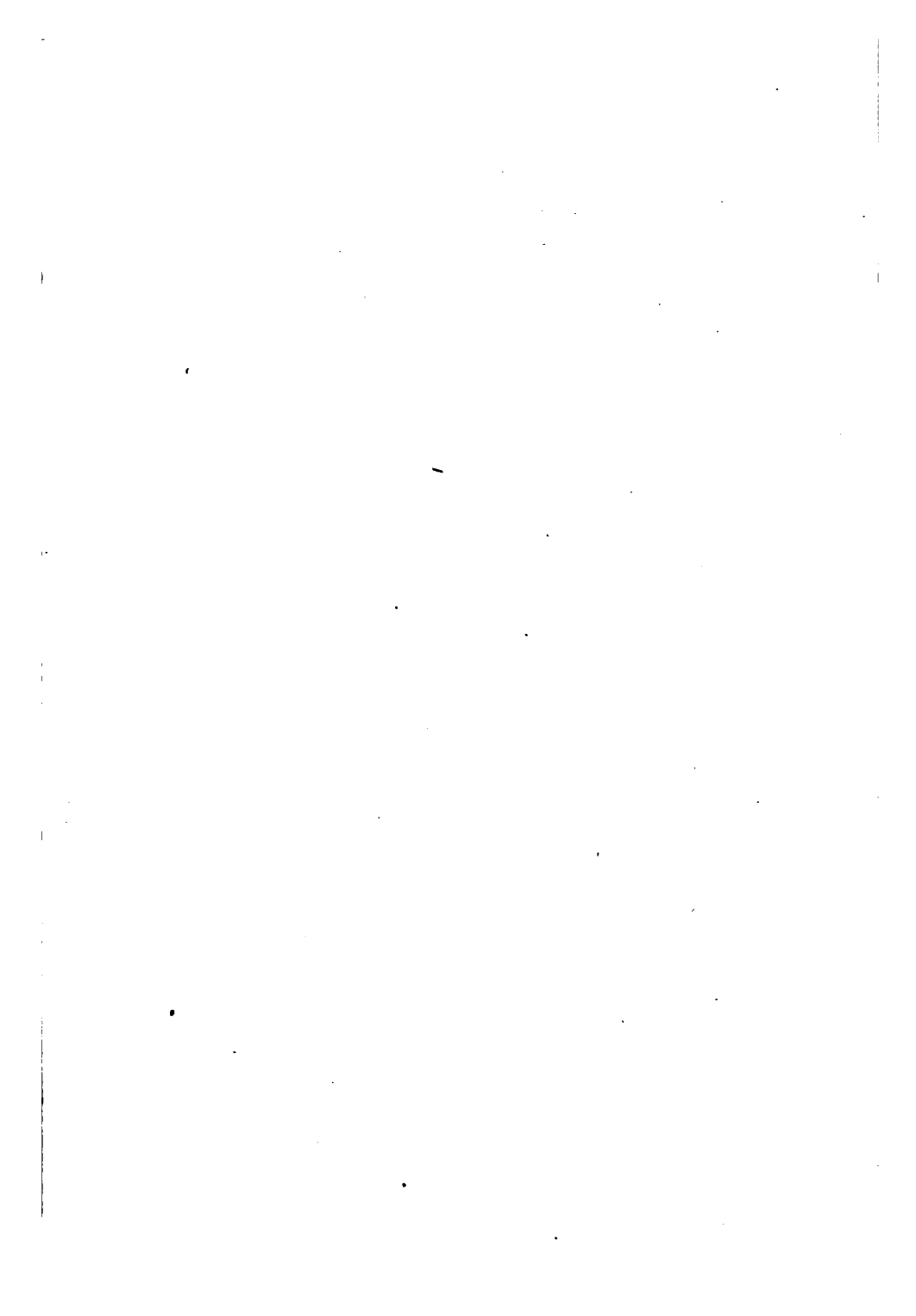
Captain Sawyer has long since paid the debt of nature. For years before his death he would visit

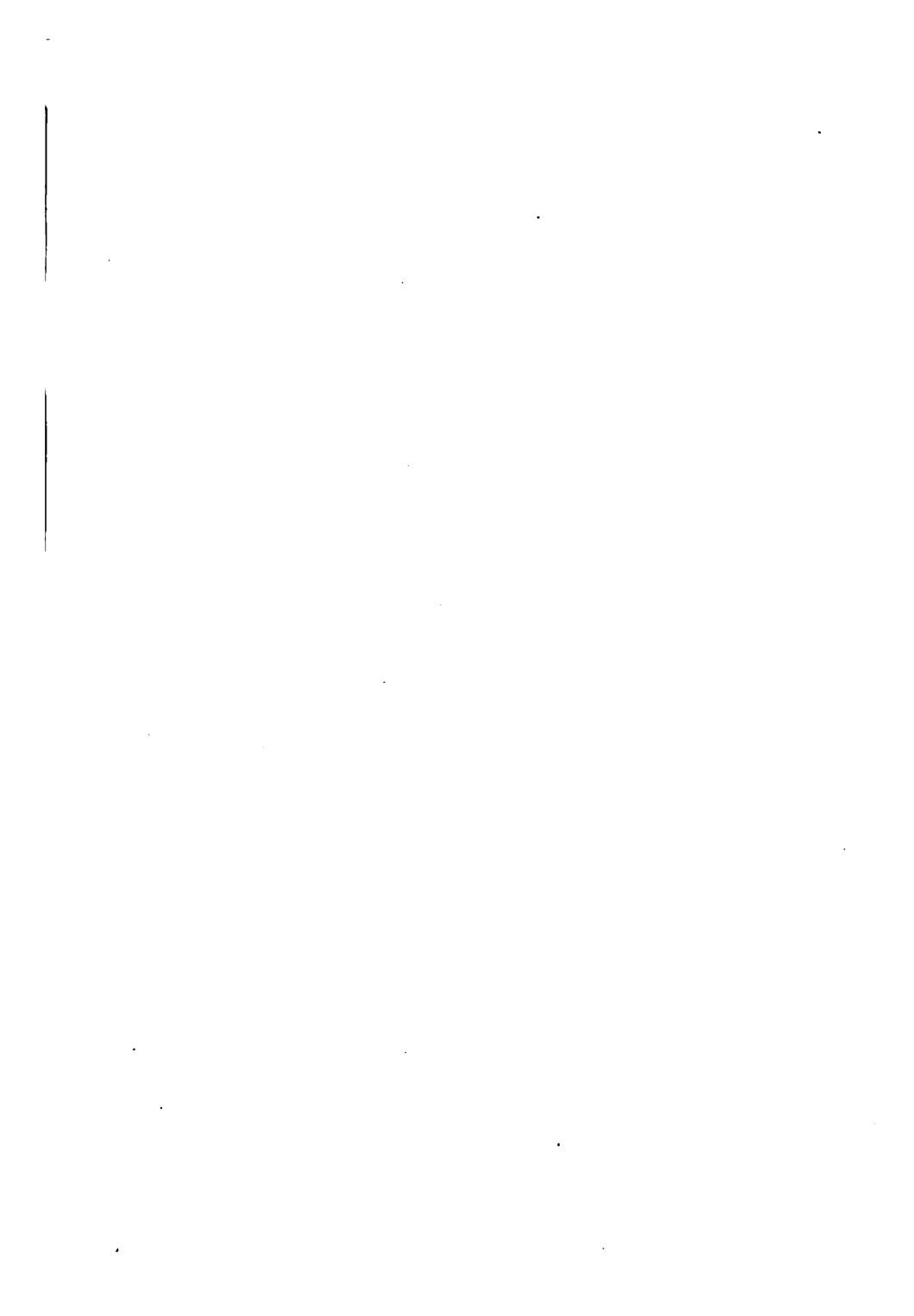
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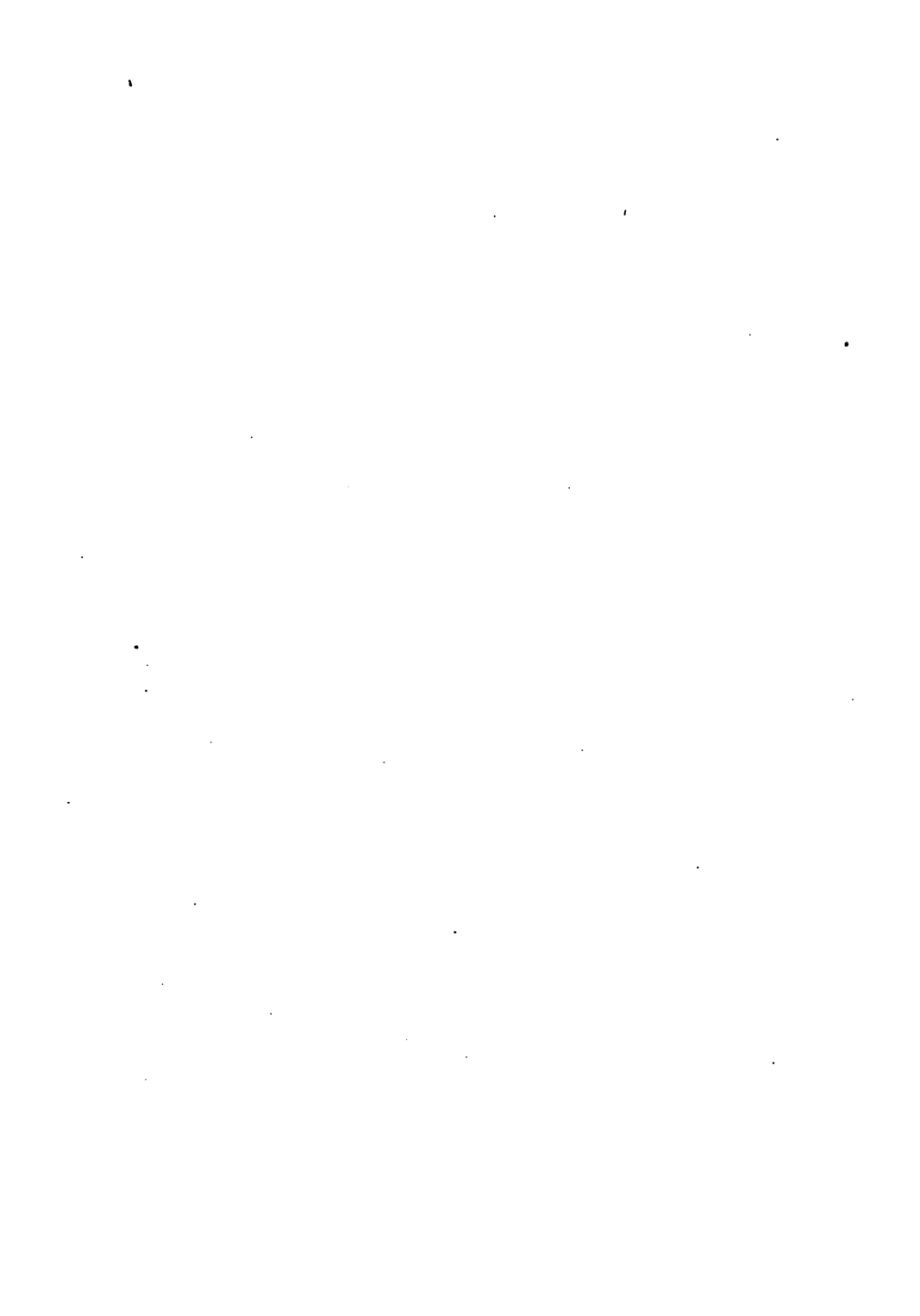
the Windemere cemetery on moonlight nights and watch for the appearance of Richard De Wilton's ghost, but he watched in vain, for no tidings of him were ever heard in Windemere.

THE END.













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